UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY INVOLVEMENT IN ADULT WORKER EDUCATION

A dissertation
presented in Fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

by

ANTHONY RICHARD MORPHET

APRIL 1984

P R E F A C E

The study as it stands, and the case which it contains, represent an attempt to come to terms with possibly the most difficult and intractable questions facing the educators of adults in South Africa. The economic, social and cultural divisions which lie between educator and learner in the field of worker education are invariably deep and wide. For that reason the challenges posed to the theory and practice of adult education are serious and significant.

My gratitude for being accepted as part of the Cape Town project and for being encouraged to pursue a study of its working is extended to a number of people. Firstly, to all of the participants in the course for the Bakery Employees Union and especially to the course leader, Mr. Johann Maree, and the General Secretary of the Union, the late Mr. Joe Daniels; secondly, to my supervisor and colleague, Professor Clive Millar, whose unmatched sense of the complexities of educational work in a riven society has taught me more than the accumulated wisdom of books; thirdly to my academic colleagues at the Centre for Extra Mural Studies whose sustaining support and encouragement have been invaluable; to the administrative Staff of the Centre, Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. de Kock whose commitment to the education of adults is daily tested, and proved, in the rigours of demanding administrative detail; and finally to Mrs. Terry Smith who typed the manuscript. The text has done repeated violence to the sensibilities of a poet who poses as a typist. I am grateful to her for the tact and skill with which she has dealt with careless thought and dull expression. Her connections with the labour movement in South Africa have made her an alert but sympathetic critic.

ABSTRACT

The presented dissertation studies the character and conditions of university based engagements in the field of adult worker education. In procedure the study is a contextualized case presentation and analysis of a worker education project initiated at the University of Cape Town in 1981. The contexts of the case are presented through a historical assessment of worker education in Britain and South Africa; and through a consideration of the social forces operating in the field of contemporary South African labour organization.

The argument of the dissertation is that educational events are constituted by social and historical forces. In order to grasp the meaning and significance of events within an educational field, analysis of the educational practice through the use of social and historical frameworks is required.

The aims, and conclusions, of the study are directed towards understanding the relations between the educational curricula and the social purposes of the participants.

The findings of the study concern, in the first instance, the continuation and forms of the Cape Town project. Their wider relevance is discussed in terms of the ways in which non-formal educational curricula operate as codes through which broader social goals and interests are given specific forms of purpose and action. The implications of the concept of the curriculum as a coded social process are detailed with reference to educational design, planning and evaluation.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

THE DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

1.1. The Origins and Presuppositions of the Study

1.2. The Aims of the Study

1.3. The Theoretical Frameworks of the Study

1.4. The Method and Organization of the Study.

CHAPTER 1

1.1. THE ORIGINS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE STUDY.

Introduction

The opening discussion of the dissertation sets down the immediate contexts in which the study has its beginnings. The origins in practical educational work within the Centre for Extra Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town form one point of origin. The second lies in the theoretical presuppositions which provide the basis and impetus for the study itself. The discussion, and the dissertation as a whole, will be characterised by a marked autobiographical element since both the educational project and the study arise out of the same personal interest in the issues of adult worker education.

1.1.1. Origins in Practice.

I was appointed to the Centre for Extra Mural Studies, University of Cape Town, in October 1980. My application for the post and the subsequent appointment contained clauses referring to my interest in attempting to develop adult education programmes for workers. In the job description of the post there were particular references to worker education and to research work.

In February 1981 the Centre received a visit from Mr. H.D.Hughes, a past president of the W.E.A., ex-principal of Ruskin College and a man of wide experience in labour education. Mr. Hughes' remit from the Centre and from his sponsors, the British Council, was to consult and advise on the possibilities of establishing a worker education programme at the Centre. During his month consultancy he visited universities and trade union officials in the Republic and conducted several lengthy discussions with Centre staff. On leaving he produced a report which gave his views of the possibilities. He identified four options for consideration.

a). a direct teaching programme

b). a facilitative programme assisting unions and industrial training centres.

c). action research programmes based on experimental teaching courses with a view to defining educational and policy issues and conclusions which might be applied to industrial education.

d). a programme developing resources and curriculum materials leading to "industrial tutor training".

In discussion of the report Hughes indicated that in his view, given the limitation in resources of both manpower and finance, the action research option might be the most feasible.

Prior to reading and discussing the Hughes paper I had thought only in terms of a direct teaching programme to be conducted in part by myself (despite serious limitations in background knowledge and experience) and in part by one or more tutors drawn from the Department of Sociology. Several steps were taken to initiate such a programme. I made contact with Mr. Johann Maree of the Sociology Department and after preliminary discussions and agreement we sought interviews with the officials of four of the independent trade unions working in the Cape Town area (F.C.W.U., G.W.U., M.W.U., F.O.S.A.T.U.). In these interviews we made tentative suggestions and proposals for an educational programme to be delivered through the Centre for Extra Mural Studies but tailored to the needs and requirements of the unions. Responses to our enquiries and suggestions were cautious and inconclusive. Reserve was expressed on two main questions. The first was the suitability of intellectuals from outside the union movement conducting educational programmes. The second was the possibility of several different unions attending the same course.

As a follow-up to these interviews we prepared for circulation a discussion document which is given below. We sent out this paper to indicate what we saw as the bases for joint educational work between unions and university.

/"University.....

" University involvement in Worker Education

A Proposal put forward for Discussion with Trade Unions

Rationale for University Involvement

1. Intellectual skills have a valid and important part to play in the development of the labour movement. In fact, the success of the independent labour movement in the 70's and 80's owes a great deal to the intellectual leadership of the progressive union organisers.

2. It is important that the intellectual capacities of the unions should be extended to a broader base to include worker leaders, shop stewards and rank and file members. The more comprehensive and acute their understanding of the political economy of South Africa, the nature of monopoly capitalism, the economics of the factory, managerial strategies in pursuit of profits and control of labour are, the more incisively workers will be able to act.

3. The unions are often too caught up in day to day struggles at the workplace to devote the necessary resources, energy and time on an educational programme even though they are often acutely aware of the need for such a programme. On the other hand the university could provide the required resources.

4. However, any education of workers must take place in consultation with, and the approval and co-operation of, the unions concerned. The educational programme would have to be planned jointly and be tailored to meet the needs of the workers and unions. In cases of disagreement the unions would have the final say over the programme.

5. Educational programmes mounted by the university must not be on matters pertaining directly to union policy, strategy, or methods of organising unless the unions directly request the university for such educational training. In principle the courses should be of such a nature that they widen and deepen workers' understanding of economic, social and political issues. Below are outlined some courses that could be offered.

Proposed courses that could be offered

1. South African Labour History

Connecting points with workers could be questions like: Why does migrant labour exist? When did it start and why?

/Why....

Why do blacks tend to be unskilled and do the lowest jobs while white workers are skilled and often supervisors? Why were there virtually no African trade unions in the early 70's? What lessons can be learned from past experiences of African trade unions?

Themes covered could be the proletarianization of the African peasantry and the development of a migrant labour system in the mining industry; the emergence and decline of the ICU; the early craft unions, the systematic destruction of crafts by capital and the defensive strategies adopted by registered unions with the changing nature of these strategies to the point where they are now opening up membership to Africans; the development and destruction of SACTU; the resurgence of black unions in the 1970's.

2. Monopoly Capitalism in South Africa

Connecting points with workers: Who owns your factory/company? What other factories/companies do they own? Does another corporation own the company that owns your factory? Is it a South African company or an international one? How do the companies in your industry work together? What organisations do they form? What does the state do to help them?

Themes: the modern corporation; shareholders, subsidiaries and holding companies; multinational corporations (mncs); distinctions between ownership, possession and control of the means of production; global strategies of mcns and the international difivsion of labour; South Africa's dependence on international capital and technology; tax allowances and incentives for investment; laws that try to ensure political stability and laws that try to disorganise the dominated classes and colours.

3. Economics of the Factory

Connecting points: Where do profits come from? Who makes the profit and who takes the profit? What would happen without workers' power at the workplace? What costs are there in production? Which are necessary and which are not? Why do machines have to be replaced and where does the money come from? Where do companies record their profits and can workers know what these profits are?

Themes: Self-explanatory except to add that it may be worthwhile looking at company accounts and indicating what they do and don't show.

/4. Managerial.....

4. Managerial Strategies

Connecting Points: How does management control workers? What are the roles of 'bossboys', foremen and supervisors? Does the worker control machinery or does machinery control the worker? Who is responsible for the type of machinery used in your company? Can workers decide on machinery, the rate of work and how jobs are to be done? How is your job evaluated? Who evaluated it? What say did you have in evaluating it?

Themes The underlying theme is the labour process and examining methods used by capital to control workers and to make maximum profits. Managerial strategies range widely covering the use of machinery that paces the worker and often embodies the skill formerly required from the labourer, up-to-date methods of management such as job enrichment, industrial democracy (as management understands the concept) and sophisticated methods of job evaluation and payment. A course such as this would be aimed to remove mystification about management's technology, knowledge and superiority that workers might feel and fear.

These four proposals are very tentative. There are many other subjects that could be covered and also other basic educational requirements on the part of workers.

An Alternative Complementary Educational Service

Initial consultations with a few trade unionists revealed other, no less pressing, but maybe even more fundamental educational needs of trade unions. In particular, any union organising African workers in the Western Cape, a majority of which are migrant workers, have these fundamental needs. These are the basic inability of many workers to speak English and the low level of literacy and numeracy of many workers.

In the light of this an alternative role that the university could play in consultation with the unions concerned would be to identify exactly what the needs are and to provide the sources with which to meet these needs. This could entail enlisting the use of an appropriate agency if one exists, or providing the resources itself. It might even be the case that the unions and university discover the need for a separate and new institution set up with the exclusive purpose of meeting these basic needs of the unions.

Formation of Courses

A further question for consideration is when to hold such courses. If the unions are interested in university offered courses it is worth giving consideration to the question. There are several alternatives:

/1. Seminars.....

1. Seminars on weekday evenings after supper or weekday afternoons straight after work lasting for 2 to 3 months.

2. Linked, continuous 2 to 3-day seminars either over weekends or workdays if workers can get time off. For best results all the course participants should be accommodated in a suitable venue for the whole period in order to ensure continuity, single-mindedness of purpose and allow the opportunity for cameraderie to build up. A full course would entail 3 to 4 sessions.

3. One-day sessions which ideally should be paid time off from work. A course would last about 2 months.

4. Two to three-week residential courses where participants spend all their time at university with full access to all its facilities.

Each of these four alternatives has its pros and cons, but some clearly offer greater scope for reflection, reading and discussion than others do.

We are not committed to getting the university involved in worker education come what may. Our aim is rather to assist the labour movement on the educational front. If our efforts ignite educational programmes in the unions that they prefer to run themselves we would have considered our efforts to have been worthwhile. We do believe, however, that it is also possible for intellectuals based in the university to play a constructive role in worker education. "

At the completion, and before the circulation of this paper, the record shows the slow emergence of a research dimension. Four recorded points of agreement between Johann Maree and myself read as follows:-

"We were agreed that we could not and did not wish to launch a regular training programme.

We were keen to get some form of course off the ground by October (1981).

The course would be seen as a way of measuring the potential effectiveness of our contribution and of further defining the needs of the unions.

It was clear that neither of us had clearly defined definitions of our role but we wished to proceed further with the attempt at definition."

(Report dated 27.3.81)

/What....

What was not done at the time, and could not have been done with any degree of fullness, was to examine systematically the assumptions on which we took the initial steps towards direct teaching. The circulation document, however, does preserve and present with fair clarity those assumptions in operation and it will in due course be subjected to analysis.

To the paper, which was circulated to selected unions in May 1981, we received no direct response, and it seemed that the initiative had failed completely. However, in August contact was made between Johann Maree and Mr. Joe Daniels, the general secretary of the Bakery Employees Industrial Union, and at Mr. Daniels' request we agreed to mount an 8-week programme for the training of shop stewards. Mr. Daniels had not been among the officials with whom we had sought contact nor had shop steward training seemed to us a possible area of educational work although the need for training at that level had been stressed by two of the officials whom we had originally interviewed. Any incipient questions which might have been asked about the nature of the contract we were entering were stilled by our desire to engage in some form of action.

After agreement had been reached with Mr. Daniels a course of eight two-hour evening classes was designed and prepared. Part of the agreement and design was that the classes would be used for research purposes both by myself and by two students of the Department of Sociology. The minutes of the Board of Extra Mural Studies of 24th September 1981 record the commitment to research.

> "12. (c) Trade Union Education - Mr. Morphet reported that a pilot course will take place between October 15 and December 4. This course will be at shop steward level and will involve the members of one union only. Mr. Morphet would attend all classes in order to prepare a full research study of the course. "

It is important to note that this commitment was intended to go only as far as an action-research study in order to provide useful information for future course design and planning.

/The....

The eight-week course took place as planned but the experience of the course, itself a project far from our original intentions, presented a number of unanticipated problems. Summarised briefly these problems were

(a) an evident and deepening conflict of goals and values between the course tutors and the participants;

(b) the gradual emergence of a range of motives and purposes in the general secretary and the union executive members which had not been apparent at the point of agreement and which called into question some of the basic purposes of the course.

(c) the development among the participants of conflicting interpretations of the major roles of the union, the shop stewards and the ordinary members;

(d) a sense that the course as a whole was undergoing severe distortion and that the planned curriculum was being re-constructed in order to serve other purposes;

These four summarised areas of difficulty caused considerable problems in the actual conduct of the classes but it was not clear to anyone at the time what the substantive issues causing the problems were. It was felt, however, that the sources of the problems lay in issues of considerable general importance and that they raised critical questions about educational work both in worker education and other more general forms of educational practice. In reaction we developed a working hypothesis that the educational problems were the immediate and present evidence of issues which had their roots outside of the educational arena in the institutional and social dynamics of the situation. It was this hypothesis, arising out of the practical work, which prompted the consideration of more extended research study.

/1.1.2. Theoretical....

1.1.2. Theoretical Presuppositions

The theoretical presuppositions, which stand prior to the study proper, are in part contained within the hypothesis already described. However, they do extend beyond its limited definition, and require to be stated to indicate the direction and impetus they give to the definition of the aims or the study; and to show the role which they play in the formulation of appropriate intellectual frameworks and methods for use in the study.

The basic presuppositions are that:-

(a) the worker education project and the course, which forms a particular aspect of the whole, present a range of material which forms an appropriate case for research study;

(b) the most fruitful potential for research study lies in the tensions, confusions and distortions of the course itself, as well as in the distance between the original intentions and proposal and the resulting educational events;

(c) the materials can be explored and defined in ways that make meaningful judgements possible;

(d) the problems of bias and distortion implicit in an autobiographical account can be overcome through appropriate methodological procedure;

(e) that the most likely and effective explanations of the conditions of distortion in the project and the course would be found in reconceptualizing the "educational" events as part of a larger social process. Implicit within this view is the assumption that the "learning system" and its curriculum contain a range of purposes, strategies and goals which should not be exclusively defined in educational terms;

/(f).....

(f) the means of exploring the relations between an "educational" and a "social" process lie in locating the events within alternative conceptual frameworks;

(g) the most effective explanatory frameworks for specifying the different levels of meaning are likely to be ones which
(i) account for the structural relations between institutions and
(ii) define the effect of broad historical forces within a social system;

(h) the goals of the study are to produce both practical judgements and theoretical formulations;
and finally,

(i) the case under consideration can be the source of generalizing judgements.

These specific presuppositions rest upon two more broadly based notions which carry considerable influence in current thinking about education. The first is the expansion of the concept of a curriculum. Curriculum in the narrow, and traditional, usage refers to the course of study as planned and experienced by teachers and students. It is a specifically educational concept which is used conceptually to control the range of variables present in a class situation by excluding those factors which are considered to be non-educational. Traditionally, curriculum has referred to the content being taught and the planned procedures through which the teaching and learning takes place.

The expansion of the concept has taken place because of a changed understanding of the nature of learning. It has become part of conventional educational wisdom that students learn as much, or more, from the unplanned learning processes which take place both within the school or institution and without, than they do from conventional lessons.

Barrow provides a general description of the change

/"It....

> "It is not simply that traditional subjects have been challenged and had their presumed values questioned, although that has happened, as in the surge away from the classics. It is not simply that new subjects are proposed for inclusion in the school curriculum, although that too happens (psychology being the most recent example). It is not even simply that the whole notion of 'subjects' has sometimes come under fire, although that has also happened.....More than this, in some proposals curriculum comes to include fieldwork, games, outward bound courses, visits abroad, sex education; in others the distinction between curricular and what used to be termed extra-curricular activities, such as chess clubs or debating societies, disappears; proposals for an integrated day sometimes eradicate a distinction between lessons and break; a recent book on the curriculum defined it as "all the experiences for learning which are planned and organized by the school"; and some proposals even define curriculum in terms of how the child learns whatever he learns rather than in terms of what he learns."
>
> (Barrow 1976:17)

Barrow's description gives the current view of the expanded idea of the curriculum but it will be apparent that the boundary he sets to the concept is in the school. This institutional limit is itself open to question on various fronts both in formal education (might not the tensions of experience set up between the institutions of the school and the family, constitute the most powerful curriculum?) and, more particularly in non-formal education where such institutional boundaries are much less easily defined or located.

In the process of expansion the notion of curriculum has lost its status as a formal and prescriptive category and has become a powerful analytical and descriptive tool used for understanding what it is that takes place in learning situations, and for grasping how the events may best be described and analysed. A curriculum may be a personal and individual construct implicitly developed and used by a learner to achieve his own goals, or it may have a collective character in which a group of learners and teachers engage in a common learning programme. In most practical cases it is both of these - there is a common collective curriculum which is in part interpreted and used by individuals to fulfil their own

/personal....

personal and private curricula. The vastly expanded concept retains, however, one crucial link with its original root - it remains a way of defining a course of learning.

The second more general notion which underpins the theoretical presuppositions of the study is that of the teacher as a researcher of his own practice. Though most closely associated with the work of Lawrence Stenhouse 1975;1981, the idea has been developed within the context of a paradigm change in the theory and practice of educational research evaluation and assessment. The change is most simply described as a decisive move away from positivistic approaches to research questions, and towards more reflexive and inclusive methods. Stenhouse's minimal definition "research is systematic self-critical inquiry" (1981:103) puts the point at its most direct and simple and should be contrasted with the traditional research paradigms which used the techniques of measured testing of "samples" and of preparing and administering standardized tests (e.g. I.Q. testing). Problems of subjectivity and bias obviously remain within the concept and require particular attention, but these are part of the responsibility of the study proper.

The presuppositions therefore arise out of current educational thinking about the nature of the subject under research study and the appropriate manner for conducting such research. They form the basis for the formulation of research aims.

/1.2.....

1.2. THE AIMS OF THE STUDY

The study has four principal aims. They are :-

(i) to provide as full an understanding as possible of the nature and meaning of the events which took place between the origins of the educational project and the conclusion of the eight-week course;

(ii) to make reasoned theoretical and practical judgements about the course itself and the project of university involvement in adult worker education;

(iii) to make a contribution to the theory of curriculum design and evaluation in non-formal education;

(iv) to make a contribution to the sociological understanding of educational practice.

The four aims are closely interrelated and dependent upon each other for their successful attainment in the study. Together they derive from a single basic rationale which is directly concerned with educational practice. The course and the project of which it formed a part represent work done, though with highly ambiguous and confusing results. The first aim is to grasp as fully as is possible what it was that took place within the work done. Without that classification and analysis no adequate theoretical grasp of the significance of the events can be gained.

Assuming that the first aim can be reasonably achieved, it becomes possible to make judgements not only about the course, but about the project and other forms of projected activity as well. Practical questions prompt this second aim. It is necessary to know with some clarity whether the university (or some part of it) should continue to invest time and expertise in adult worker education projects. Such judgements will have practical purposes and consequences but they will depend on theoretical judgements made on the basis of what elements in the project are definable as relatively predictable (rather than as the consequences of random chance).

/In....

In the endeavour to draw out of the experience of the work done the theoretical principles and models on which reasonably secure predictions can be made, the study will advance towards the attainment of the third aim. Practice in non-formal education is beset with many problems but among the most serious and significant is the inadequacy of the theoretical understanding of the nature and purposes of a non-formal learning curriculum. Non-formal education is typically free of the extrinsic educational apparatus of tests, examinations and certification which acts so powerfully to set the objectives, establish the patterns of interaction and assess the results of a curriculum. Its purposes are altogether intrinsic to the educational process and it is, therefore, in a position of relative weakness and confusion when confronted by general theoretical questions related to the curriculum. The third aim is to use the description and analysis of the course as a case on which to construct theoretical arguments about the appropriate ways of conceptualizing the questions concerning the non-formal curriculum. Allied to the study of the curriculum itself are related questions of the ways in which non-formal work can be evaluated. The study as a whole is one form of evaluation, but it is by no means the only, nor necessarily the most appropriate procedure of evaluation. The third aim embodies a reflexive and self-critical component.

The final aim, while building on the first three, contains an additional and important assumption. By selecting the field of sociology for emphasis the aim implicitly brings forward the view that the analysis, discussion and theoretical conceptualizing of the course (and project) will draw most directly on the social location and action of the work. Neither a limited nor a deep defence of the assumption is required at this point in the argument. The social situation of the educational work is, prima facie, a

/significant.....

significant factor. The study as a whole will determine, as it works towards this aim, the nature and extent of the significance. One point can usefully be made concerning the utility of the fourth aim. Non-formal education, as a concept and a practice, has made important advances within the past 20 years in a number of different social settings. The sociological understanding of its purposes, achievements and potentials remains, however, at a relatively simple and programmatic level restricted often to generalized perceptions of the practice as a panacea for social deprivation (Coombs, 1968:1973) or as a tool for the enslavement of the poor (Mbilinyi M, 1979). The study aims to make its contribution through close focus and complexity rather than broad and general statement.

/1.3 THE.....

1.3. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

In the preceding two sections of this chapter, the origins and aims of the study has been described. In the discussion which follows attention will be given to the resources and procedures which will be used to reach the specified aims.

The assumption which underlies the discussion of two different aspects of the study (resources and procedures) is that the same events or "facts" may be studied in differentways, and may produce different interpretations, by placing them within different interpretative frames of reference. The near-universality of this practice in modern scholarship derives from the disintegration of the tenet that a single form of reference dominates all attempts at reflective analysis. The major transition from the idea of a single encompassing frame of reference, to the idea of multiple referential systems, originates in physics with the impact of Einstein's work on Newtonian physics. Under the conditions of enquiry operative in modern scholarship it is impossible to stabilize an interpretation by reference to, or the assumption of, a fixed framework of meanings, because such an evaluation can be reinterpreted from within an alternative system. The intellectual problems posed by these conditions are formidable and they have created, not only anxieties, but also attempts to construct stable interpretative systems based, not on the laws of physics or biology, but on the "laws" of social systems. The most notable attempt in this endeavour has been the construction of a framework based on the social theory of Marx. The project of a Marxist "science" is not, in my view, viable, since despite the fundamental nature of the theory it cannot fully deal with its own relativistic position in history. It is finally no more than a system of ideas floating within the current of human history.

/Similar....

Similar points might be made about other powerful explanatory systems of reference, particularly Darwinian evolution theory, Freudian psychology or even the Structuralist theory of Levi-Strauss. Merleau-Ponty's observation about "the classics" is relevant

> "The history of thought does not summarily pronounce: This is true; that is false. Like all history, it has its veiled decisions. It dismantles or embalms certain doctrines, changing them into"messages" or museum pieces. There are others, on the contrary, which it keeps active. These do not endure because there is some miraculous adequation or correspondence between them and an invariable "reality" - such an exact and fleshless truth is neither sufficient nor necessary for the greatness of a doctrine - but because, as obligatory steps for those who want to go further, they retain an expressive power which exceeds their statements and propositions. These doctrines are the classics. They are recognizable by the fact that no one takes them literally, and yet new facts are never absolutely outside their province but call forth new echoes from them and reveal new lustres in them. We are saying that a re-examination of Marx would be a meditation upon a classic, and that it could not possibly terminate in a nihil obstat or a listing on the Index. Are you or are you not a Cartesian?. The question does not make much sense, since those who reject this or that in Descartes do so only in terms of reasons which owe a lot to Descartes. We say that Marx is in the process of becoming such a secondary truth."
>
> (Merleau-Ponty, 1974: 10).

Having rejected the idea that there is one encompassing framework of interpretation a system of ideas to which all others can be referred, it must at once be said that not all systems are of equal validity. We are not adrift in a thoroughly relativised world in which any referential system can establish its validity by its mere existence. Some intellectual systems are of more worth than others and the test of validity lies in their analytical and explanatory power.

/Because....

Because of these conditions a study such as the one projected is faced with two problems. Firstly, all frameworks being used must be specified, consciously utilized and deliberately selected for their utility and appropriateness. Secondly, each framework must in some way be tested, referenced and evaluated against the others, so that the particular explanations and definitions can be measured.

The aims of the study guide the process of the selection of the relevant frameworks in the two areas of resources and procedures.

1.3.1. Constituting the frames of reference

The project and the eight-week course can be conceptualized in three ways. It can be seen from within itself as an educational event in which teaching and learning are the prime activities. It can also be seen as a point of intersection linking the interests and activities of the university and the trade union. Finally, it can also be understood as a focal point within a broad scale socio-historical process.

The frames of reference appropriate to these three differing conceptions of the course can be found

(a) in the field of curriculum evaluation
(b) in sociology
(c) in the social history of education.

Each field is broad and diffuse in itself. As they are drawn upon to constitute explanatory frames of reference in this study they are shaped by the common focus of interest in the project. In use they share the same nucleus and they overlap each other to a considerable extent.

Within the framework of curriculum evaluation the course provides the point of origin and the interpretation focuses primarily on the content and the processes of interaction which are negotiated within the classes. The evaluation enquiry does proceed, in a secondary stage, to enquire into the immediate context of the course, but it identifies the context as the "learning milieu" which surrounds the immediate activity of the classes. The perspective is located

/within.....

within the classes and directed outwards.

In the sociological framework the course remains the first cause of the enquiry, but the prime attention falls not upon the exchanges between people as individuals defined as teachers and learners, but upon them as people who occupy particular institutional roles and positions and who represent institutional interests. The sociological aspect of the study therefore falls on the intra - and inter-institutional character which the course carries, and traces the way the institutional contexts shape and define the interactions. The founding question in this aspect of the enquiry is the extent to which the particular character of the course (and project) can be usefully illuminated and explained by reference to the immediate formative institutional and social contexts. Related to this question are the important issues of alliances and cleavages between the institutions principally involved. Put bluntly the questions are "Why should the university wish to, and endeavour to, work with trade unions?", and "Why should trade unions see it in their interest to arrange learning programmes with the university?". "Is there a 'natural' community of interests between them or are there signs of cleavages?". "How are the relations managed?".

The overlap between the educational and the sociological frame is clearly apparent. In the concept of a "learning milieu", the educational enquiry is looking at the same set of evidence as falls within the prime area of focus of the sociological questions, namely the context of interests which arise in the institutional and social situations of the protagonists. However, the way the evidence is seen and the emphasis it is given will differ in the two frames.

The socio-historical framework examines the course from a very much more detached vantage point. It identifies the course as one event within a stream of similar and related events. In taking such a view the historical perspective is able to give attention and emphasis to a more comprehensive assessment of influence. Inevitably

/much.....

much of the discussion of adult worker education history will centre on the particular institutional sites on which this took place and will examine the roles and perceptions of specific actors, but it will add the further dimension of placing the specific sites within the lines of force operating in the social context as a whole. The overlap area remains highly significant but it is illuminated from different points of vantage. The historical account will be selective and will give considerable attention to the record of institutional responses to social situations and, therefore, will produce evidence which may assist in answering the questions posed bluntly above. Further, and more importantly, it may suggest ways of answering those questions so that they yield their fullest meanings.

/1.4. THE.....

1.4. THE METHOD AND ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

1.4.1. Method

There is a major methodological issue at the centre of the dissertation which manifests itself in the relation between the researcher and the material being studied. The danger is solipsism - the result of a situation in which the researcher creates the data required to fit an interpretation, which he has inserted into the material in the first instance.

The issue derives from the fact that the study, in the worst instance, could become an analysis by the researcher of himself. He creates the project, works on the course, records the events of the course, interprets the meanings of the course and pronounces judgement upon the results.

This procedure would automatically, and necessarily, disqualify any research study which had as its fundamental rationale the objective testing and measurement of data, or where the judgements of the study were cast in the form of a validation or rejection of a formulated hypothesis. Within this study, as it is planned, the issue, though it is not a prima facie disqualification, raises other more ambiguous problems. The discussion of method which follows is intended as the definition of an approach which deals adequately with the difficulties raised.

The major problem rests in the potential for the distortion of the realities of the project resulting from the interpretative bias of the researcher/course tutor. It is a problem inherent in all forms of research which employ a participant observation technique as the prime means of gathering data,and appropriate research strategies are required to deal with the question

Ruddock (1981:54) offers a clear and useful summary of the possibilities and limits of participant observation.

/"participant.....

> "participant observation is heavily dependent on the skills and personality of the researcher. Its findings cannot claim to be valid in the same sense as can those of some surveys, or as reliable as experimental methods because a different participant observer might come back with a quite different account of events. Nevertheless, it is generally claimed to be truer to the social realities under investigation than other methods. Its immediacy, flexibility and comprehensiveness far outreach the possibilities open to measurement and experiment".

In developing an appropriate method for the study two steps were taken to utilize to the full the positive aspects of participant observation (immediacy, flexibility and comprehensiveness) and at the same time to control the potential for distortion.

The first step was to proceed as systematically and openly as possible in defining the presuppositions, frameworks and procedures through which the data would be considered. The intention in taking this step was to make present, within the study, the structures and expectations of the researcher, thereby providing the reader with a critical observation point in relation to both the material and the researcher.

The second step concerns the data more directly, though it also refers back to the relationship between researcher and material. The decision to locate the project *as a case* within a historical dimension was intended to contextualize both the data and the researcher. Through the historical framework the data can be evaluated against criteria of probability, in the sense that the examination of earlier cases will set up a pattern of judgements about the kind of events that are likely to take place within a worker education project operating in a particular social location. Further the specific case, presented in its own terms on the basis of the recorded log of events, incidents and processes, can be assessed against the criteria of probability.

The ultimate justification of the principal method, and the steps

/taken .....

taken to deal with the difficulties, lie in the aims of the research. The study seeks to be explanatory and illuminative first and, only secondarily, to be evaluative. It attempts to show what happened, how it happened and why it happened. On that foundation it answers questions of value with judgements.

1.4.2. The Data

The basic data under study was gathered under the conditions of action research, in other words under the constraints imposed by the actual conditions of the course. The circumstances could not be considered ideal for research since the levels of trust and confidence were not high and the tenuous relationships between tutors and participants required the research process to remain more passive and receptive than active and probing. It was felt that any attempts to gain entry to the thoughts, motives and goals of participants, beyond what could be seen in the classes themselves, could jeopardise the total project. The credibility of the university team was considered to be at issue and research enquiries, it was felt, could have been misinterpreted with serious consequences for the future prospects in the field.

The consequence was that the data consisted of a record of the classes logged in note form as the discussions took place. On the day following each class, the gathered information was checked out in discussions with a student observer. Attention was given to the major shaping processes active in the course as they were interpreted through gestures, language and styles of behaviour; more precisely the critical incidents were recorded as they took place, with notes made, not only of the substantive issues involved, but also of the sequence and manner in which these were managed by participants.

This participant observation data was supplemented by documentation of the steps leading up to the formation of the project, and then to the holding of the specific course.

/The.....

The advantages offered by data gathered in this way are that it is immediate, and that it records with flexibility the events as they occur in process. At its best it is also inclusive and self-critical in that there is no closed interpretation which is seeking confirmation. The disadvantages are that key processes and events can escape notice, either because they are too obliquely coded by the actors, or because the observer is preoccupied by dominant, if transitory, questions or interests. It has the potential of being a skewed account.

1.4.3. The Sequence of the Study

The planned sequence of the dissertation begins with a review of the literature which provides the intellectual resources of the study. The review will include a commentary on the literature which constitutes the sources of the method of inquiry, as well as on the historical studies in British and South African worker education and on the writing in educational evaluation. The purpose of the review is to relate the study to its antecedent intellectual practice.

The second phase of the sequence will be an account of selected episodes in the history of adult worker education in Britain between 1820 and 1920. The account will concentrate on defining, through particular episodes, the major issues and traditions in the field of British experience.

The British experience will be complemented by an account of South African worker education history showing how the British practice enters the South African context in two forms and how the particular conditions of South African industrialization reconstitute the practices in different forms. The Cape Town project will be located in the context of South African practice.

The third phase of the dissertation will focus on the course itself giving close attention to the foundation conditions in which the course took place and presenting a direct record of the progress of the course.

/The.....

The final phase in the sequence will concentrate on an analysis and interpretation of the course in the contexts of discussion developed in the earlier sections. On the basis of this interpretation judgements will be offered concerning the significance and value of the course. In this way the four aims of the dissertation will be achieved.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The chapter which follows seeks to locate the study in terms of the literature of the relevant fields of enquiry. It gives attention to the literature of method as well as to the historical and sociological studies which provide the basis of the assessment of the field of worker education. For the discussion of the project and course the literature of educational evaluation is reviewed in a later section.

2.2. The Method of the Study : the literature

Research study in education has a long history of quantitative practice. Measurement of the performance of either scholars and students, or systems-in-use, whether on a micro or macro scale, have taken research towards the employment of quantitative techniques. The use of qualitative methods of enquiry is only relatively recent and has been spurred by the realization that educational activity contains within it conditions of great complexity, which cannot be adequately studied in purely quantitative terms. Thus the survey and the experimental test have yielded their position of supremacy to a more intimate concern with the actual experience of teachers, pupils and administrators. The most compelling and illuminative recent case of qualitative research techniques is to be found in the work of Willis (1978). Willis framed a large structural question as the focus of his work.

/ " The....

> "The difficult thing to explain about how middle class kids get middle class jobs is why others let them. The difficult thing to explain about how working class kids get working class jobs is why they let themselves".
>
> (Willis, 1978:1)

In setting out on the task of the difficult explanation of the fate of working class kids, Willis chose qualitative methods.

> "The qualitative methods, and Participant Observation used in the research, and the ethnographic format of the presentation were dictated by my interest in 'the cultural'. These techniques are suited to record this level and have a sensitivity to meanings and values as well as an ability to represent and interpret symbolic articulations, practices and forms of cultural production. In particular the ethnographic account, without always knowing how, can allow a degree of the activity, creativity and human agency within the object of study to come through into the analysis and the reader's experience. This is vital to my purposes where I view the cultural, not simply as a set of transferred internal structures (as in the usual notions of socialization) nor as the passive result of the action of dominant ideology downwards (as in certain kinds of marxism) but at least in part as the product of collective human praxis".
>
> (Willis, 1978: 3-4)

The issues of "agency" referred to by Willis are central to the discussion in this study, since, as the historical account makes plain, adult worker education is a field of contested values, attitudes and practices. Some means of registering the processes, through which the commitments of the participants make their meanings and purposes felt within the educational events, is therefore essential.

Behind Willis's confident invocation of qualitative techniques and Participant Observation lies an established field of practice both in educational and broader social studies. His case study of "twelve non-academic

/working-class.....

"working-class lads from a town we shall call Hammerton" is buttressed not only by the theory of case study research but by a sure sense of the relationship between a particular case study and a general historical/ cultural account of modern English society.

The present study draws, albeit less confidently, on the same tradition of study. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, of which Willis has been a member, has been pursuing since 1975 a collective project concerned with the analysis of cultural practice. A major element in the work of the Centre has been its concern with locating the relationship between particular cultural practices and the social history of the society. (Johnson R., 1979a:41-71).

Both educational policy development (Baron et al, 1981) and specific studies of educational movements in history (Johnson R.,1979b:75-102) have formed an important part of the total project. The work of the C.C.C.S. provides some of the resources upon which Willis draws.

The C.C.C.S. project is, however, itself an inheritor - particularly in the fields of educational and cultural studies. In education it draws most notably on the studies by Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970). Both researchers adopted the qualitative methods to study their chosen fields of interest. Hargreaves, studying interpersonal relations in a secondary school, showed through the adoption of eclectic methods grounded in his own participation in school processes, how the practice of academic streaming shapes the patterns of relations within the school and confirms the cultural patterns of the community outside the school. Lacey (1970) illuminated the internal life of a school by showing how the structure and practices of the school lead to the formation of sub-cultures within the institution. He drew a distinction between differentiation carried out through the "separation and ranking of students according to a multiple set of criteria which makes up the normative, academically orientated, value system of a grammar school"; and polarization which he understood as an autonomous process within the

student body through which negative sub-cultures were formed. In the latter instance, in particular, Lacey's research was heavily dependent on participant observation techniques.

Participant observation as a research method derives ultimately from the research tasks faced by anthropologists studying alien cultures. The rationale behind the method was that more could be discovered about the conditions and meanings of an unknown culture if the researcher became, at least temporarily, a member of the group or tribe and observed their lives from within as a participant. The method entered sociology in the work of William F.Whyte in 1943.

> "The spring of 1937 provided me with an intensive course in participant observation. I was learning how to conduct myself and I learned from various groups but particularly from the Norton Street gang."
>
> "Sometimes I wondered whether just hanging on the street corner was an active enough process to be dignified with the name 'research'. Perhaps I should be asking these men questions. However, one has to learn when to question and when not to question as well as what questions to ask"
>
> (Quoted in Worsley, 1972: 103/105)

> "When I had established my position on the street corner, the data simply came to me without very active efforts on my part. It was only now and then, when I was concerned with a particular problem and felt I needed more information from a certain individual that I would seek an opportunity to get the man alone and carry on a more formal interview."
>
> (Worsley, 1972: 106)

The advantages of participant observation have been referred to; its particular weakness is its inability to provide a strong enough definition of the structural influences which shape the internal 'culture' of the situation. It is able to respond to and grasp the definitions which the actors give to, and use in, the immediate situation, but it lacks explanatory power in dealing with contextual questions.

/A different....

A different body of literature in sociology, and education, provides valuable guidance on the method of testing particular events within their immediate structural or institutional contexts. Berger, (1963,1972) and Berger and Luckman (1967) develop a perspective which shows how men create the social world and how they are simultaneously themselves created by it. At the core of the argument is the view that the reality experienced by individuals and groups is itself a social construct sustained over time by the interaction between people and the social institutions which they enter at birth. The usefulness of Berger's method and perspective lies in the emphasis it gives to the power of social locations to shape the perceptions and actions of individuals and groups, as well as the capacity it grants to human agents to perceive, respond to and interact with the conditions of social life. However, Berger's central image of social life as a drama played through by multiple actors occupying multiple roles has a fundamental problem, in that it discounts the significance of social history as making the context of the drama. Each social action has a synchronic relation with other social actions taking place in the same time context (the issue so powerfully emphasized by the structuralist theorists) and all may be seen (and would be so seen by Berger) as linked acts within the human comedy; but there are diachronic relations as well.

C. Wright Mills (1970) captures the immediate significance of diachronic connections.

> "The facts of contemporary history are also facts about the success and failure of individual men and women. When a society is industrialized, a peasant becomes a worker; a feudal lord is liquidated or becomes a businessman. When classes rise or fall, a man is employed or unemployed; when the rate of investment goes up or down, a man takes new heart or goes broke. When wars happen, an insurance salesman becomes a rocket launcher; a store clerk, a radar man; a wife lives alone; a child grows up without a father. Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both."
>
> (Mills 1970: 9)

/In specifying....

In specifying the "uses of history" Mills argues a point highly pertinent to this dissertation,

> "Our chance to understand how smaller milieux and and larger structures interact, and our chance to understand the larger causes at work in these limited milieux require us to deal with historical materials. Awareness of structure, in all the meanings of this central term, as well as adequate statement of the troubles and problems of limited milieux, require that we recognise, and that we practice, the social sciences as historical disciplines. "
>
> (Mills, 1970:165)

From within the historical discipline itself E.H. Carr makes a very similar point.

> "Sociology, if it is to become a fruitful field of study, must, like history, concern itself with the relation between the unique and the general. But it must also become dynamic - a study not of society at rest (for no such society exists) but of social change and development. For the rest, I would only say that the more sociological history becomes, and the more historical sociology becomes, the better for both. Let the frontier between them be kept wide open for two-way traffic."
>
> (Carr, 1964:67)

The dissertation founded on the methodological literature reviewed above, depends for its purchase and explanatory capacity on the notion of the two-way traffic of concepts, ideas,and procedures; attempting in the process, to get inside a small learning milieu, to describe it from within, and to demonstrate the larger causes affecting the conditions operating in and on the milieu.

2.3. The Historical Literature

The core of the historical literature used in the study is a special form of social history. Its close focus is on educational history as it is found in a small segment of non-formal adult education. To work exclusively within this literature would be, however, less than adequate to the task of providing effective explanations of the larger social forces impacting upon educational and labour institutions. The literature dealing with educational history is therefore

situated in fairly abbreviated ways in historiographical context.

2.3.1. Literature relating to the British Case

The writing of social history in Britain was reconstituted in a framework of newly defined concerns, practice and perspective, during the late 1950's and 1960's. The 'new' history, strongly influenced by versions of Marxism, rewrote the British experience from the period of the English Revolution up to the early twentieth century. The major shift in perspective rested in the fact that the historians were concerned to understand the world in terms of the experience of the mass of ordinary people, rather than from the perspective of a governing class exercising political control. Within the "bottom up" perspective issues of class formation and struggle became critical, as did changing structures of economic organization.

The period in which adult worker education becomes significant lies between 1820 and 1920. The broad social history of this period is best given in two of the major works of the new history: the books of E.P. Thompson (1963): E.J.Hobsbawm (1968). Thompson concentrates on the transformation of the eighteenth century society of peasants, craftsmen and small scale workers into a large urban proletariat between 1790 and 1830. His major concern is the interaction between the working people and the massive processes of change introduced by industrial production, and his emphasis falls on the creative capacity of the common people and their culture in confronting the change. Hobsbawm takes his less detailed account of the structural change of British society under the conditions of full industrialization up to the present. His focus is less upon the lived experience of small groups of people and more upon the significant economic changes, though the human consequences of economic development are important in his account.

/It is.....

It is in the historical context described in Thompson and Hobsbawm that the issues and practices of worker education arise and have their significance. These have been studied by a number of historical researchers and from different points of view. One body of literature bases itself within the assumptions of traditional liberal, non-vocational adult education. Jepson (1973), Peers (1966), Kelly (1962). The social perspectives implicit in the traditional adult education literature, which are seldom brought into question by practitioners, are strongly grounded in the presuppositions of liberal elite culture. They are, that the functions of adult education are to "provide" - a key term in the vocabulary - educational and cultural opportunities for people who "need" and will "benefit" from them. The liberal historical perspective is of the successful development of effective means of education provision, over time. The main historical theme is growth of activity and the consequences are seen as beneficial to the society as a whole. Worker education is a sub-theme of considerable importance. Through it adult education is seen to make its unique contribution to overcoming the divisive and disruptive potentials of social deprivation and class antagonism. The "heroic tradition" claimed by adult education, of Mansbridge, Tawney and Cole, was formed in the worker education field.

The alternative perspective in the historical account of adult education is located well within the interests and concerns of the "new" history. By far the most important and influential is the work of Simon (1960, 1965). Simon's work incorporates the assumption that history is to be written from the perspective of the ordinary citizen and, accordingly, he focuses his attention on the struggle of the working class to create its own institutions and to enforce its demand for universal free

/education....

education on the state. His educational subject matter is inclusive, dealing principally with schooling, but also in some detail with adult education practice. Worker education is for him the most significant area of adult education and his attention is given not only to opportunities provided by middle class institutions but falls particularly on independent, popular working class initiatives in the field. He is especially sensitive to the questions of conflict and cooptation which surround the relationship between middle class philanthropic endeavours and working class responses.

Other important general educational studies in the same tradition are those by Harrison (1961) and Silver (1975) (1980).

Works which are exclusively interested in the issues of worker education in the period are chiefly concerned either with the Workers Educational Association (W.E.A.) or the National Council of Labour Colleges (N.C.L.C.). The history of the W.E.A.is given in Stocks (1953) and that of the N.C.L.C. in Craik (1964). The cleavages between the two organizations are strongly reflected in the different ideological approaches of these two books. A further key document in the history of relations between the two groups is the Oxford Report on Working Class Education 1907. Further, and more immediate,discussion of the W.E.A. is found in Tawney (1964) and in a number of pamphlets (Thompson 1968 ; Jennings 1976), as well as numerous journal articles appearing in Studies in Adult Education and Adult Education.

The opportunity provided by the historical literature is for comparative readings of particular critical events. The two contrasting approaches and perspectives provide useful comparative ways of comprehending the dynamics of worker education in an historical dimension.

2.3.2 Literature of the South African Background

Adult worker education was introduced in two very different forms into South Africa in 1917 and 1919. One initiative is recorded in Johnstone (1979); another in a record of the University of Cape Town (1919).

The specific labour contexts of the two initiatives differed in obvious ways (e.g. socially), but there are also less obvious interpretative disagreements about the nature and position of labour in South Africa as a whole. The dispute within South African historiography between liberal and Marxist- inspired historians is of immediate significance for this study in two major ways. The account given of

(a) the trajectory and significance of the economic development of South Africa
and
(b) the character and meaning of the urban expansion of the black population, differs sharply in the two main historical traditions.

From the liberal perspective (Wilson and Thompson (1969, 1971), Denoon (1972)) economic development based upon industrialization has been seen as the means through which South African society is able to move out of the patterns of racial domination inherited from colonial conquest. The imposition of apartheid in 1948 is understood as an irrational colonial hangover imposing the racial patterns of the past on the rationality of the growing market system. Within this perspective the experience of black migrant labourers in the cities is conceptualized as one of massive cultural disruption and adjustment (Mayer P. (1973), Kuper L. (1965)). The vital point is that the new industrial system is taken as the positive given. Black labourers are seen as

/ struggling ....

struggling to come to terms with new conditions. Afrikaner nationalism is seen as a refusal to accept the logic of the new industrial order.

More recent developments of the liberal perspective have incorporated the arguments of pluralism (Leftwich (1974), Lipton (1979)) which accord prominence to the notions of ethnicity, a common economy and the differential incorporation of groups within a core society.

Materialist historical studies have challenged the liberal interpretations over the last fifteen years and more. On the two major questions the materialist historians (Van Onselen (1980) Legassick (1974), Wolpe (1972)) have argued that the economic development of South Africa must be understood as the penetration of industrial capitalism which has used, as a rational instrument of policy, the structures of racial domination developed during the colonial period. Far from being an irrational and restrictive control placed upon the developmental processes of a market economy, the apartheid policy has made possible the rapid accumulation of capital through the maintenance of a coercive system for the exploitation of labour. Revisionist historians have problematized the notion of "development" and, in common with British radical historians have asked what "development" meant in the experience of the mass of ordinary people in the society.

The interpretation of the black experience contained in this perspective rests on the idea of proletarianization. The ethnicity and the inherited culture of black people is less prominently featured than their coercion and control in a labour force. The "labour system" created in the interests of mining and agricultural capital to begin with - later the manufacturing sector - has been the focus of much attention (Van Onselen (1982), Lacey (1981), Callinicos (1980), Webster (1978), Bozzoli (1979), Lodge (1983))

/These....

These specific studies of the origins and growth of a black working class under the conditions of migrant labour have been complemented by studies of the colonial period which show the conquest of tribal kingdoms and their incorporation into the system of labour of the colonies and later the nation state (Guy (1982), Peires (1981)). The same literature also gives close attention to strategies of resistance developed by black workers - among them the creation of trade unions.

The account provided in the revisionist history of the growth of a black South African working class has not been challenged and stands as the major explanatory framework within which the issues of labour organization and education must be understood. The importance of the liberal interpretation lies in the fact that it has provided in the past, and still continues to do so, a rationale and an ideology within which a wide range of practice, particularly in education, is defined and justified.

2.3.3. Adult Education Literature in South Africa

The literature on adult education in South Africa is slim and scattered. The standard works in the history of education (Malherbe (1977) makes reference only to the adult education service developed for the troops during World War II and refers to the opportunity lost at the end of the war when the service was not brought into civilian life. Two of the most useful books deal with adult education as a minor theme in the study of the black people's struggle (Roux 1964 and Roux and Roux 1970). They are important sources largely because of the direct involvement of the author in nearly the whole range of adult educational initiatives from the beginnings in 1918 until the 1950's.

A recent study (Bird 1980) has endeavoured in an important way

/to thematize....

to thematize the history of adult education for black people as well as to gather the experience of people involved in the attempts to create night schools. Outside of these works limited discussions and references to adult education (and particularly worker education) occur in Thomas (1978) and in journals (South African Labour Bulletin, Social Dynamics, Perspectives in Education).

Nearly all of the commentary is historical or sociological. There is very little discussion of the specifically educational purposes and procedures of adult education.

CHAPTER THREE

BRITISH ADULT WORKER EDUCATION

CHAPTER THREE

BRITISH ADULT WORKER EDUCATION

3.1. Before 1832 : Two episodes

The passing of the Reform Act in 1832 marked the first major restructuring of the English political state after the settlement of 1688. The pressure for reform had arisen principally as a result of the development of industrial production. The paternalist agrarian and mercantile society of the eighteenth century had given way to a political economy based upon new processes of manufacture and agriculture. Pressure for reform before 1832 came not only from the new working class gathered in the metropolitan areas under the factory processes of production, but from the disenfranchised middle class, the owners of the factories and employers of the industrial workers. Thompson's (1963) account shows clearly the linkages between the radical middle class leadership and the growing working class. The philosophical radicals, such as Mill and Bentham, argued the existence of a common rational basis uniting the interests of a reforming middle class and the interests of the society as a whole. In the argument could be found the basis for common approaches to the issues of reform from both the middle class and the working people.

Education did constitute a particular area for common endeavour but for different reasons; the working class demand for educational rights formed part of a general demand for civil rights in the society of birth; for the rights to free speech, free association and political expression. The demands were made in the wake of the French revolution and continued the popular traditions of radicalism engendered in the English revolution 1640 - 1660.

/The middle....

The middle class interest in universal education was based upon a less directly experienced demand. In favour of reform and for the society to escape the traditional authority of the aristocracy and the doctrinal power of the established Church, the radicals argued in favour of a universal, secular, rationally based education system.

The alliances and linkages were, and could not ever have been more than, temporary. They were the result of particular historical movements and the cleavage of the fundamental interests was deep and long lasting.

As Simon argues

> "In fact throughout this period the industrial middle class were engaged in a fight on two fronts. First and foremost they fought to oust the aristocracy from power, and clear the road for the development of a capitalist order------(but) from 1820 onwards it became progressively more important to damp down the political activities of the working class which threatened to take an independent direction."
>
> (Simon,1960:128)

The Reform Act ruptured any remaining common programme and exposed the contradictions between the educational demands of the two groups. The middle class radicals had an ideological commitment to education which was rooted in the interests of the employer class, itself requiring men to work up to twelve hours a day. The working class also demanded education, though, because they did the work in the factories, they simply had not the time to attend to anything other than a Sunday School.

In terms of educational practice the idea of universal enlightenment on a scientific, secular basis turned into its opposite.

> "What was meant by a sound education was soon to become clear; discipline, mass instruction in the three R's, and, last but by no means least, religious instruction."
>
> (Simon,1960: 175)

/An important....

An important general theme of educational theory and practice lies just beneath the evidence of the emerging contradiction between middle class and working class commitments. It is the manner in which the class interests interact with ideological and theoretical formulations of policy. At particular points the theoretical positions and perspectives may lead in one direction, but as the class interests shift and are differently defined, so is the theory reinterpreted. This is not to deny the significance and importance of the philosophical arguments, since they provide important sources of action and decision, but it is to suggest that they are relatively powerless when the material interests of a group or class, out of which they have come, cut across their vision and prescriptions.

Two important cases for studying this general theme emerge in the adult educational field during the period. The first is the Mechanics Institution and the second the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

3.1.1 The London Mechanics Institution 1820

After an extended series of informal study meetings two Radical journalists, J.C. Robertson and Thomas Hodgskin proposed the establishment of the London Mechanics Institution as a learning centre under the control of workers. The attempt to found the Institution produced a bitter, but illuminating controversy. Hodgskin in his initial manifesto announced

> "Men had better be without education - properly so called, for nature herself teaches us many valuable truths - than be educated by their rulers; for then education is but the mere breaking of the steer to the yoke; the mere discipline of the hunting dog, which by dint of severity is made to forego the strongest impulse of his nature and instead of devouring his prey, to hasten with it to the feet of his master."
>
> Quoted in Kelly, 1962 : 121.

/The vehemence.....

The vehemence of the tone and the vigour of the metaphors indicate not only the writer's skills but the intensity of the issues he is contesting.

Hodgskin approached the Radical leader and politican Francis Place for assistance in founding the Institution, and Place organized subscriptions from a range of Radical and Whig notables, introducing the conflict between worker control and control and patronage by middle class people.

Reviewing the event in the course of his historical study, Kelly argues that though the workers lost the control issue it could be seen as something not altogether maleficent.

> "In the end, of course, money talked and the result was that the institutes instead of serving as instruments of political, social and economic emancipation as Robertson and Hodgskin had hoped, became on the whole supporters of the existing social order. It should be said, however, that had the policy of working class independence been rigidly adhered to the institutes could hardly have become so widespread or so successful educationally as they in fact were."
>
> (Kelly, 1960 : 121)

Kelly's views express very neatly his general assumptions about educational progress, which he sees occurring whether the particular issues are "lost" or "won". Eventual progress embalms all contests.

Simon, on the other hand, considering the same event, reaches different conclusions. He sees the control issue as a defeat for independent working class initiative with a consequent loss of meaningful learning and an increase in the means of social control.

> "the underlying aims were clearly to exploit the workers' technical and inventive powers, to instruct them in the right political and economic theories ----and to provide suitable distractions to divert their minds from independent political activity."
>
> (Simon, 1960 : 158)

/The episode.....

The episode of the London institution - and the subsequent development of Mechanics Institutes - illustrates in microcosm the inter-locking of several key themes which will continue to manifest themselves in both the British and South African history of adult worker education.

The first of these is the strong sense of the need felt by workers to create and retain independent control of their own institutions of study. In adult education at this early period, the demand is expressed, not for access to existing institutions, but for the establishment of independent centres under worker control. Worker control initially means the management of the institution but it carries the automatic corollary of control over curriculum and practice which in turn means that the educational and social goals of the institution should remain under the definition and direction of workers themselves.

The second major theme is evident in the response of sympathetic middle class Radicals. They are in a position of formal ideological support and they possess the resources to fund the institutions, but in return they look for control and direction of the initiative. In the case of the Mechanics Institute, and most other initiatives, the consequences are registered in the curriculum, practice and goals of the institution.

We see therefore in this particular incident the manner in which the major structural and political pressures in the society work themselves into the institutional formations and the educational practices adopted in adult education. Working class organization and resources were inadequate at the time (1820) to sustain a venture of the scope planned by Robertson and Hodgskin and their initiative succumbed to the stronger position held by the Radicals and Whigs.

/3.1.2. The Society....

3.1.2 The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge

A second instance drawn from the same period focuses on a different area of educational activity. Part of the ferment of activity among working people was carried forward by a vigorous and various popular press. Thompson gives extensive and detailed evidence of the work not only of Cobbett and the Political Register but of a host of newspapers (particularly the Black Dwarf) and pamphlets. Through the press medium, the spirit and demands of the radical and revolutionary elements of the working class were communicated up and down the country. It was in an attempt to counteract this influence that in 1821 the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was founded. The founder, Charles Knight, made his intentions and opinions perfectly plain.

> "If the firmness of the Government and, what is better, the good sense of the upper and middle classes who have property at stake, can succeed for a few years in preserving tranquillity, the ignorant dissemination of sedition and discontent will be beaten out of the field by opponents of better principles, who will direct the secret of popular writing to a useful and righteous purpose."
>
> Quoted in Simon, 1960: 159.

The Society failed in its purpose, though modern commentators have debated the causes of the failure. Kelly states the problem as the fact that the Society "assumed too high an intellectual level in its readers" (p.167). Simon clearly regards the S.D.U.K. as an absurd ideological implement of the Radical movement in the middle class. Harold Silver (1975) quotes from the popular press (The Poor Man's Guardian) which attacks the S.D.U.K. as a society which "under the mask of a liberal diffusion of really useful information has spread abroad more canting, lying, mischievous trash than perhaps any other society that ever existed".

(Silver 1975 : 42)

/Silver....

Silver adds, "The approach of some of the middle class radicals and their allies to the Mechanics Institutes and to the useful knowledge movement, demonstrates the sharp split, most visible in the 1830's, between their philosophy of social reform and social control, and the reform activities of the independent working class movement."

(Silver,1975 : 43))

Richard Johnson (1979b)quotes from The English Chartists' Circular referring to the S.D.U.K.,

"Their determination is to stifle enquiry respecting the great principles which question their right to larger shares of the national produce than those which the physical producers of wealth themselves enjoy."

(Johnson, 1979b: 78)

The S.D.U.K. episode reveals with some clarity, both through the facts of its formation and the responses which it received, the very great influence which broad social dynamics may have upon an educational venture in times of social crisis. E.P. Thompson in a wide ranging comment on nineteenth century middle class reformers, puts the point succinctly

"Even the best intentioned of these reformers saw their ventures as a form of social insurance against popular disturbance. These responses became so deeply embedded in the polite culture that one may see them reactivated again and again during every period of popular unrest in the nineteenth century - during the reform movement of 1819 and 1832, Chartism, the 1880's. They may still be detected in the anxious response of some to the "problem" of working class leisure today."

(Thompson, 1968:10)

/3.2. University....

3.2. University Extension and Popular Socialism 1870 - 1890

Thompson's comment (quoted above) stands as a reminder of the bedrock assumptions within the "polite culture" throughout the century, but it needs to be considerably qualified by the evidence of significant shifts and changes of opinion and practice throughout the society from the middle of the century.

> "Some time in the 1840's all this (conditions of exploitation) began to change and to change rapidly, though by local and unofficial action rather than by any large national legislation or organization. Employers began to abandon "extensive"methods of exploitation such as lengthening hours and shortening wages for 'intensive' ones, which meant the opposite.
> The Ten hours Act of 1847 made this a necessity in the cotton industry, but without any legislative pressure we find the same tendency spreading in the industrial north. What the Continentals were to call the "English week", a free weekend, at all events from Saturday midday, began to spread in Lancashire in the 1840's, in London in the 1850's. Payment by results (that is incentive payments) to workers undoubtedly became more popular, while contracts tended to shorten and to become more flexible though both these developments cannot yet be fully documented. Extra-economic compulsion diminished, the readiness to accept legal supervision of working conditions - as by the admirable Factory Inspectors - increased. These were not so much victories of rationality, or even of political pressure, as relaxation of tension. British industrialists now felt rich and confident enough to be able to afford such changes."
>
> (Hobsbawm, 1968 : 125)

> "But", continues Hobsbawm's commentary, "the most obvious symptom of the change was political : the Reform Act of 1867 (followed by a whole crop of important legislative changes) accepted an electoral system dependent on working-class votes. It did not introduce parliamentary democracy, but it implied that the voters of Britain reconciled themselves to its introduction which subsequent reforms (in 1844-5, 1918 and 1928) achieved with diminishing amounts of fuss --------
> The rulers of Britain did not welcome the Reform. On the contrary, but for the mass agitations of the poor they would

/" not have.....

> "not have yielded anything like so much - though their readiness to yield in 1867 contrasts strikingly with their mass mobilization of force against Chartism in 1839, 1842 and 1848. However, they were prepared to accept it because they no longer regarded the British working class as revolutionary. At all events, they now saw it as divided into a politically moderate aristocracy of labour, ready to accept capitalism, and a politically ineffective, because unorganized and leaderless proletarian plebs, which presented no major danger. For the great mass movements which mobilized all the labouring poor against the employing class, like Chartism, were dead. Socialism had disappeared from the country of its birth."
>
> (Hobsbawm, 1908 : 126)

The period between 1850 and 1875,as described by Hobsbawm,was a time of massive economic advance and boom, and though it was followed by a collapse into the so-called "Great Depression" of the 1880's and 90's, it was nonetheless a period of significant social and educational development. In 1870 elementary education was provided, by legislation, for all children of the working class. Furthermore in the period there were a host of non-formal educational and community initiatives launched by the philanthropic and socially concerned middle class. Toynbee Hall, the urban "missions" of schools and universities, the Y.M.C.A., the Boys Brigades, the Working Men's College and many others date from this interlude in class antagonism. For many in the middle classes it was the opportunity for the discovery of the real conditions of working class life.

Among the wide range of projects undertaken in a spirit of Christian concern and philanthrophy, and of particular interest to this study, was the programme of University Extension begun in 1873. It was a small but significant part of the complex response of the privileged middle class to the rapid and perplexing processes of social change.

/"Amidst.....

> "Amidst the great national reforms in the world of politics, elementary education and trade unionism, progressive thought within the universities turned naturally to a consideration of the role of universities in an obviously changing society. The rationale of University Extension stemmed from this new awareness of the widening of the area of democracy. In essence the idea was simple; to take the university out to the people since they could not all come to the university. In operation it encountered great practical difficulties, which it never fully solved."
>
> (Harrison, 1963 : 226)

The Extension movement was not alone in its confrontation with practical problems and these were drastically exacerbated by the resurgence of a powerful popular socialism during the depressed years of the 1880's. What had seemed within easy reach in 1873 moved further and further beyond possibility in the political turbulence of the 80's and early 90's.

The problem as it presented itself to the proponents of University Extension in the field of the education of working men was very different to the problem of extending the university to the middle classes of provincial cities. In the latter case the movement was strikingly successful and the formation of colleges and universities in Manchester and Birmingham points to the effective developmental role which the movement played.

In relation to the working classes, however, the problems were more complex, the resistance owing a good deal to the attitudes developed earlier in the 1830's within both the polite and the popular culture.

> "It is now an established fact that the working classes will not attend lectures which are entirely managed by members of the higher classes. It is also an established fact that they will attend lectures which are managed by members of their own class."
>
> 1884 Gen.Sec.Northumberland District Extension Committee
>
> (Harrison,1963 : 239)

/Harrison's.....

Harrison's comment on the situation is

> "The ineffectiveness of University Extension in this field was similar to that of other middle class organizations which sought to provide workers' education in the nineteenth century and sprang from the same root, namely a totally inadequate realization of the extent and the depth of the sense of alienation among the working class."
>
> (Harrison, 1963 : 240)

Harrison's judgement is certainly well-founded but is perhaps too severe and absolute to stand as the final comment on the early period of Extension. Rowbotham (1981) pursues a more detailed kind of judgement with important qualifying results.

> "Through the Extension movement two idealisms encounter one another. One came from the sense of religious crisis and the search for a new philosophic basis to liberalism which troubled the late nineteenth century upper middle class intelligentsia. Another less clearly documented working class idealism was sustained by some strands of Christian belief, co-operation, temperance and certain radical communitarian and utopian traditions. The points where the movement touched certain students deeply were moments in which their own lofty ideals could find a resonance in those of the lecturers."
>
> (Rowbotham, 1981: 91)

Rowbotham's description and analysis is educationally compelling, and it is in no way to diminish her point about the "resonance" of different idealisms to suggest that the worker students whom she has in mind were precisely the "politically moderate labour aristocracy" mentioned by Hobsbawm. Her detailed description of "Christian belief, co-operation and temperance" suggests this group very particularly.

The early period of University Extension though relatively unsuccessful in reaching working people established at least two important facts. The first was that the Universities (particularly

/Oxford.....

Oxford and Cambridge) were conscious of responsibilities to a wider constituency of learners, outside of the students attending the colleges. The nature of the responsibilities was the subject of continuing debate, as were the means, potential and actual, of fulfilling them. The second fact of major significance was that the Extension movement set a pattern of innovation for the Universities. In confronting new responsibilities and new audiences the Universities chose to innovate new services at the margins of the existing institutions. The ethos of Extension was one of the diffusion of the values of the core institution into new areas of the society. Simon gives a good description of the ethos.

> "Its leaders and active workers among the middle and professional classes were, then, educationists, conscious of the social problem, seeking a means to social harmony, motivated sometimes by a sense of guilt and by sympathy with the aspirations of labour. All shared a liberal,, humanist outlook: education was good for its own sake, the workers deserved all that the university could offer in the form of extra mural teaching; education would spiritualize their lives. This implied a desire to provide a broad, humane, comprehensive, above all, an impartial,education, one rising above, and so enabling students to rise above, the ephemeral and material struggles of the time."
>
> (Simon, 1965 : 304)

The Extension movement confronted many problems in its organizational form, its institutional basis and its educational assumptions, but it did serve to establish a crucial link between established middle class institutions and working class aspirations. It was, in contrast to the Mechanics Institutes and the S.D.U.K. of the 1820's, the beginning of a process of linkage and involvement between different groups and class interests. Kelly, in what is too confident a judgement, nonetheless registers the important fact of connection and involvement, at least from the university side.

/"Thus.....

> "Thus at the very time when the universities,as a result of internal reforms, were resuming their rightful place as the intellectual leaders of the nation, they were drawn out of their isolation and brought into friendly and fruitful contact with the world outside. Here was a change of tremendous import,of which the full consequences for the social and political life of the country were to be seen in the twentieth century."
>
> Kelly, 1962: 237)

From the linkage established through the Extension movement the universities learned much and continued the process of innovation through the later years of the 19th century and into the twentieth. Continuous innovation was imperative because of the rapidly changing balance of social forces after the beginnings of the Great Depression.

After the Second Reform Act 1867 and the introduction of elementary education in 1870 the working class entered the social arena on a different basis. They had access to political power and to the means of developing a formally educated leadership. They had achieved these breakthroughs not so much by concerted pressure, but, in Hosbawm's comment because the voters "no longer regarded the British working class as revolutionary".

However, in the 1880's there was a renewed upsurge of radical, secularist and socialist agitation among working class groups. The Social Democratic Federation, the Social Democratic Party and the Independent Labour Party generated a ferment of debate and activity in both the popular press and through meetings and study groups. E.P. Thompson's biography of William Morris (1955) provides a thorough and detailed description of cross currents and conflicts among these groups, as well as a strong sense of the intensity of the cultural and political climate as a whole. It was a period in which the Labour movement, as the leading voice of the working class, was forming the positions and

/structures....

structures of its own policies and leadership. Morris himself is a key figure of the period since his biography gives a graphic and compelling account of the movement of a wealthy, middle class man committed initially to Romanticism and intellectual sympathy with the working class coming eventually to hold a fully Marxist and socialist view of the struggle of the working class.

A good deal of the activity was directly and overtly educational (though without the formal structures of organized classes with teachers and students) and the development of these independent initiatives alongside the educational provision organized by middle class groups (through, for example, University Extension) set up the diverging traditions of work.

Simon notes the divergence.

> "From the first upsurge of socialism in the 1880's there had been a proliferation of educational activity organized by the working class for the working class. first in small circles but then reaching out more widely into the Labour movement embracing a wide variety of organizations concerned with educational and cultural activities. There had also been for humanitarian, philanthropic and political reasons a growing provision for the workers by other organizations - the adult school movement, settlements and clubs and the universities."
>
> (Simon, 1965 : 340)

The existence of two conflicting traditions had pronounced and far reaching effects of the forms and procedures of University education for adult workers. The growth of working class educational practice exacerbated all the weaknesses which had been evident in the Extension movement from the beginning.

/Moreover....

Moreover, the working class tradition was in the process of developing a radically different view of the social purposes of education. It was premised on a conflict view of the social order and directed its efforts at developing a full understanding of the necessity of class struggle and the need for a fully committed socialist movement. Religion came under attack and the works of Darwin and Marx were established as foundation studies. The material life of the society, as evidenced in its economic and political arrangements, was a major focus of interest with the necessary result that the position of the working class as a class became evident and explicit.

By contrast the middle class philanthropic tradition, though strongly influenced by Christian socialism, laid strong stress on the ideal of social harmony. Its social perspectives were premised on a consensus view of social order and its key emphasis lay on individuals 'rising above' the material conditions of conflict and circumstance by means of spiritual and intellectual enlightenment.

It is an easy error to fall into - to caricature both of these traditions - but perhaps the best safeguard against simplification and foreshortening is not to amplify the descriptions already given but to follow some aspects of the historical record. The selection of detail will be aimed at describing what people did with both traditions.

3.3. The W.E.A., the Oxford Report and the 'social harmony' tradition

The emergence of the working class tradition placed pressure on the University Extension movement and revealed most clearly its need to reorganize its provision for workers. There were manifest difficulties in two crucial areas. Firstly because the movement was required by University decision to finance itself, it was forced to rely on short sequence of large public lectures in order to raise sufficient money. The contrast between the formal, high academic, performance of the large public lecture and the intimate and intense

conversational discussions of the working class clubs and societies, was sharp.

Secondly, the issues of control and management which first emerged around the Mechanics Institutes were as potent as ever. Working class audiences had always sought to control their own activity, and in the 80's and 90's this had become a reality in the growth of both new formal and informal institutions.

The crucial reorganization of the Extension Movement came with the formation in 1903 of the Workers Educational Association (W.E.A.). If any organization can be said to be the creation of one man, the W.E.A. was the product of the vision and work of Albert Mansbridge (Mansbridge 1944. Stocks M. 1955. Jennings B. 1976). His personal biography, social position, intellectual ability and vision gave him remarkable capacities as a catalyst working upon other men in the Universities, the Church, the Co-operative societies and the Trade Unions. Mansbridge successfully inspired and negotiated a working construct binding the Universities and the Trade Unions by initiating his approach through the Church on the one hand and the co-operative movement on the other. The common bonds of Christian idealism and social coherence provided the links between the Church and the Co-operative movement and, through representatives from each, he was able to draw in the Universities and trade unions. The concept at the base of the W.E.A. was of a joint body of university and working men undertaking different aspects of the educational enterprise. The workers would undertake responsibility for organizing and managing the educational activity and they would exercise their right to choose their own tutor from among those offered by the university. The university undertook to provide and pay for the tutor, to establish and control the content of the courses and to monitor the performance of the classes.

/The tutorial.....

The tutorial design was established in the pioneering class at Rochdale. Thirty working people gave a pledge to attend weekly classes for 24 weeks for each of two years. In return Mansbridge undertook to provide them with 'the best tutor in England'. The first tutor was R.H. Tawney.

It will be apparent from even this brief account that the W.E.A. was formed precisely to deal with the problems which had prevented the Extension Movement from reaching the working class audiences. Organization and control of classes and teachers passed into worker hands, continuous demanding tutorial study took the place of lectures, but the control of content and standards, and the organization of the infrastructure, remained in University hands.

In terms of the two traditions mentioned earlier, the W.E.A. was clearly within the terms of the "social harmony" tradition, but it cannot be seen as simply a co-optative strategy. There was considerable common ground between its educational goals and those of the explicitly socialist movement within Labour. The W.E.A. shared with the socialist tradition the conviction that education was not for material advance, for getting on in the world, nor was it for individual upward mobility, which meant that its purposes were not to separate an individual from his class. On the contrary, education was explicitly for the improvement of the life and position of the class as a whole through the creation of a class leadership. Where the two traditions differed most sharply was in the approach they adopted to the social purpose of education. The W.E.A. sought to influence the course of social life through spreading the effects of the "kingdom of the mind". Essentially, this entailed a vision of gradualist reform conducted through the dissemination of rationality. The socialist vision was by contrast committed to

/the transformation....

the transformation of the society through dedicated political action. Education was one important instrument in the preparation for effective political action.

Looked at in purely political terms, the relevance of which became more pronounced after the election of 1906, which brought a Liberal landslide victory and the first direct representation for Labour, both traditions could be seen to be competing for the commitments of the Labour leadership. The social harmony tradition sought to educate labour leaders in order for them to throw their weight behind the Liberals and in order to continue the processes of reform. The socialist tradition sought to create a meaningful theoretical alternative to gradual reform and to win the Labour leadership to the cause of transformation.

It is between 1906 and 1910 that these two traditions come into sharp and dramatic conflict. The conflict is itself an immediate consequence of the 1906 election, which showed with stark clarity that the Labour movement which had loomed threateningly during the whole of the 19th-Century had finally arrived at the seat of power. Some of the evidence of the impact of the election result can be seen in the fact that in the next year a body of 14 men, 7 from the W.E.A., and 7 from Oxford, was commissioned to assemble a report for the university on Oxford and Working Class Education. The terms of reference for the commission were to produce recommendations for the guidance of the university in its efforts to reach working class students. The report is a key document in assessing the nature and purposes of the social harmony tradition.

The report begins from the premise that it is to form part of a process of reform within the University as a whole and its

/observations.....

observations and arguments are directed towards carrying through the reform programme. In noting the changing social context of the university the report comments on the "changes in the constitution of English society and distribution of political power" (47) and in a much quoted passage makes the case for the continuation of the influence of Oxford.

> "The Trade Union Secretary and the 'Labour member' need an Oxford education as much and will use it to good ends, as the civil servant or barrister. It seems to us it would involve a grave loss both to Oxford and to English political life were the close association which has existed between the University and the world of affairs to be broken or impaired on the accession of new classes to power."
>
> (1908 : 48)

The report as a whole, and this reference in particular, provides striking evidence of the extent of the processes of change going on in the society. In all of the preceding references the stress within the middle class educational movements has been on the philanthropic and idealistic provision of education for working men to help them in their circumstances. The social argument has been consistently submerged beneath the desire to sympathise with and to improve the lot of working men. In this comment the relations between the two strands of the argument have been reversed. The social and institutional arguments are dominant ("a grave loss both to Oxford and to English political life"), and the philanthropic sentiments are submerged. ("and will use it to as good ends") "We must educate our masters" was Disraeli's comment in the same context.

The same shift in the balance of forces in the society can be glimpsed from the opposite perspective in the speech made by J.M.McTavish, a Plymouth shipwright, at the Oxford conference called to discuss the report in 1907.

/"I claim.....

> "I claim for my class the best of all that Oxford has to give. I claim it as a right - wrongfully withheld - wrong not only to us but to Oxford....Not only are workpeople deprived of the right of access to that which belongs to no class or caste, the accumulated knowledge and experience of the race, but the race loses the services of its best men. I emphasize that point because I wish it to be remembered that work-people could do far more for Oxford, than Oxford can do for the workpeople. For, remember, democracy will realize itself with or without the assistance of Oxford,but if Oxford continues to stand apart from the workpeople then she ultimately will be remembered not for what she is but for what she has been."
>
> Quoted in Thompson, 1968 : 22

It was a measure of the success of the W.E.A. and the Oxford Report that MacTavish made his speech in Oxford - and his allegiance is clearly to the social harmony perspective, but it is anything but an acquiescence in the co-optative strategy of the ruling order..

What the report, however, does not ever make problematic is the idea of "an Oxford education". For the commissioners that was the decisive given value, and they saw their task as creating structures which would enable the value to be effectively disseminated. In substance their proposals are not dissimilar to the principles and practice of the W.E.A. They endorse the two year tutorial system as an effective preparation of adult worker students for admission to the university. They offer a number of detailed curricula which they consider to be suitable for tutorial classes and, in common with the quotation given above they argue that increased working class provision and access form a logical development of Oxford's mission to the society.

/3.4. The two.....

3.4. The two traditions in conflict The Ruskin strike 1909

An important feature of the proposals and arguments presented in the 1907 report were the references made to Ruskin College. The joint committee included three members of the governing Council of Ruskin College and the recommendations envisaged closer co-operation between the University and the College through establishing lectureships in applied economics and political science at Oxford. The courses proposed were to be open and free of charge to Ruskin students. There was a further suggestion of a diploma in political science and economics which would be available to Ruskin students.

The movement towards closer co-operation between the University and Ruskin was especially significant because it represented an attempt to link together the two competing traditions in worker education which we have noted above.

Ruskin College had, in its foundation constitution and practice, no direct connection with the University. It had been founded in 1899 by an American philanthropist Walter Vrooman who had been fired by the ideals of the form of socialism which he had found in the works of John Ruskin. The purpose of the college had been clearly defined at its foundation. It was to be for working men where they would be taught "to methodically and scientifically possess the world, to re-fashion it and co-operate with the power behind evolution in making it a joyous abode of, if not a perfected humanity, at least a humanity earnestly and rationally striving towards perfection"

(Craik 1964 : 36)

The opening of the College had signalled its location and purpose emphatically. Trade Unions, trades councils, co-operative societies and socialist parties had joined in inaugurating and

/supporting....

supporting the institution as a vital part of the socialist tradition within the labour movement.

The first principal of the College, Dennis Hird, had been compelled earlier to resign his "orders" within the Church because of the strongly socialist line he had taken in his preaching. His pamphlet "Jesus the Socialist" sold 75,000 copies. Hird was appointed by Vrooman to teach economics and political science which he did from an explicitly Marxist, working class, point of view.

By 1907 there were 50 students at Ruskin, all of whom were supported financially by the trade unions from which they had come. Most of them, according to Craik, were already acquainted with some form of socialist thought, though it was immediately plain to incoming students that the second year senior students possessed a very much more powerful and assured sense of the socialist tradition based on Marx. The influence of Hird was dominant in the College.

From the point of view of the students and some, but not all, of the staff, the recommendations of the Oxford Report, made with the support of members of their governing Council, were seen as a threatening encroachment on the character and practice of Ruskin as a labour college. These fears were confirmed when the Council, in an attempt to respond positively to the advances of the University, ruled that the teaching subjects of the Principal (Hird) should be changed from sociology and logic to temperance and literature.

The pressures building up within Ruskin were in microcosm the pressures evident throughout the worker education movement. The students, staff, and the unions supporting them wanted an education that would prepare them for active service in the socialist cause within Labour. On the other hand, the governing

/Council....

Council, together with some of the staff, were in search of a less partial, liberal education as had been described in the Oxford Report. As the conflict intensified, it became clear that the issues at stake included not merely the traditional question of control or independence, but also the more immediate questions of content, particularly in the fields of economics and politics, as well as methods and goals.

The efforts of the university to forge closer links with Ruskin take on an intensely dramatic character. Simon describes the visit of Lord Curzon, the Chancellor and recently Viceroy of India, to Ruskin. In response to Lord Curzon's proposal of closer relations, Simon quotes Hird.

> " My Lord, when you speak of Ruskin College you are not referring merely to this institution here in Oxford, for this is only the branch of a great democratic movement that has its roots all over the country. To ask Ruskin College to come into closer contact with the University is to ask the great democracy whose foundation is the Labour movement, a democracy that will in the near future come into its own, and when it does it will bring great changes in its wake."
>
> (Simon, 1965 : 320)

In Hird's statement there is clearly visible not only the conviction and commitment of the socialist tradition, but a vision of society which is in contradiction to the establishment vision represented by Curzon. The drama concerns not merely educational principles and practice but the fusion of these in conflicting visions of social life.

In response to the governing body's attempts to shift the curriculum away from the Marxist base developed by Hird, the students formed themselves into an organization known as the Plebs League dedicated "to bring about a more satisfactory connection of Ruskin with the Labour Movement". The governors assumed that the Principal was involved with the Plebs League and took action against him on this basis, finally dismissing him in March 1909 for failing to maintain discipline.

/The students.....

The students as a result went on strike in defence of Hird and organized their own classes and teachers but it became clear early on that they lacked the organizational and financial strength to secure Ruskin College within the Labour movement, and they were compelled to campaign for a new and independent Labour College.

The organizational efforts of the students within the trade unions were successful in the sense that by September 1909 the new Central Labour College opened in Oxford with Hird as principal. The Central College formed only one part of the whole proposal and the Plebs League set about organizing local tutorial classes in order to counter the influence of the W.E.A. They began working in the Rochdale area pioneered by the W.E.A. and rapidly constituted a significant challenge to the work of the W.E.A. and the universities.

3.5. Post 1920

There can be no doubt that the most extensive social impact of both the W.E.A. and the Labour Colleges was made in the inter war years which followed the reconstructive initiatives of 1919. The 1919 report "Education for Democracy" largely drafted by R.H. Tawney expressed the hopes and ideals of a generation seeking to redress the wastage of war in a spirit of national reconstruction. Adult education, and specifically the education of workers, formed an important part of Tawney's vision of the national education agenda.

By the late 1920's, after 25 years' work, the W.E.A. had extended its influence throughout the country with 11,750 tutorial class students in 16 district organizations and 459 branches.

/Furthermore.....

Furthermore, throughout the 1930's the movement (Stocks,1953 : 102) drew to itself the most gifted teachers and scholars of their generation. G.D.H. Cole, R.H.Tawney, Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson and many others, began their academic and scholarly careers in the W.E.A. tutorial classes of the 1930's and 1940's. Williams, reflecting on the nature of adult worker education and its later decline, comments,

> "I remember G.D.H. Cole who was a university representative saying at the meetings of the (Oxford) Delegacy : 'I am damned well not interested in adult education. I am interested in workers' education'. That was the conflict and he lost. Of course, some would say the battle was fought and lost long before this. I don't think so myself but I can see the way of writing history that would make it out to be so. The adult education movement split before the First World War, with the famous Ruskin strike, between a consciously affiliated workers' education which eventually produced the National Council of Labour Colleges, and the Workers' Educational Association which attached itself to the Universities and tried - I think with more success than the N.C.L.C. said was possible - to develop a working class education which would draw on the university claim of exploring all positions rather than teaching from an affiliated position.....The balance between these two principles was itself being fought out in the adult education movement of the forties."
>
> (Williams,1979 : 79)

Williams also notes in passing the transformation of the W.E.A.

> "Over the years there in the end occurred a pretty successful conversion of the W.E.A. into something that could be indifferently called Further Education: any other emphasis was deflected except in certain specialized areas of trade union education."
>
> (Williams,1979 : 81)

and in a concluding judgement

> "The W.E.A. had certain positives as against any closed internal propoagandising education. Yet in the end you cannot be financed and academically controlled by those kinds of universities, and carry out a programme of working class education."
>
> (Williams,1979 : 82)

/Williams'.....

Williams' comments are apposite in two respects. They made the very important point that the "balance of the principles" continued to be contested long after 1909; and they point towards the eventual absorbtion of the worker education element within what he somewhat bitterly calls "Further Education".

If the W.E.A. became in the post world war II period a middle class further education activity, the N.C.L.C., with the electorial victories of the Labour Party in 1945 and 1951, had been drawn closer to established governmental structures and provision. The lasting achievements of the N.C.L.C. lie in both the establishment of the Trades Union Congress Educational Service which has national responsibility for the provision of shop steward and health and safety training for Trade Union members, and the creation of the four Labour Colleges which offer diploma courses to trade union delegates.

In the period 1910 to 1950 the breadth of influence of both the W.E.A. and the N.C.L.C. was at its most extensive, but the issues at the centre of both movements were not substantially different to those which had been defined with such clarity in 1907 - 1909.

For the purposes of this study, therefore, the focus remains selective and the angle of vision distorting - both approaches having been adopted to expose the "social variables" in the field.

3.6. CONCLUSION: Implications, for the study, of the British case history

The complex case history of British adult worker education carries two main implications for the study.

Firstly, the development of educational practices in Britain constitutes the roots of South African worker education. The two traditions present in the period 1880-1920 enter South African

/labour.....

labour organization in different ways, and at different points, in 1917 and 1919. At the time of entry they are more or less unchanged but, in responding to the very different conditions of the South African context, they develop different forms and approaches. Nonetheless, even in the most recent developments in the 1970's, the traces of the British inheritance are still visible. The British case history is, in an important way, the history of South African worker education as well.

Secondly, the British case provides fertile possibilities for drawing inferences about the relations between educational practice, as it is understood by the actors and participants, as it manifests itself in sociological terms of institutional roles and functions and as it is located within the context of historical pressures. At several points in the account given, it is possible to see what particular key individuals thought they were accomplishing (e.g. the Principal of Ruskin College); to grasp the relations between particular institutions, and to locate the development of institutions (e.g. the W.E.A. and the N.C.L.C.) within a historical context. The historical record lacks sufficient detail to treat these relations with accuracy and specificity, but it serves, as a whole, to demonstrate the importance of contextualizing particulars within social and historical circumstances. The "educational" moments emerge as points of contact or contradiction between forces which have their main life well outside of the educational sphere.

Baron et al (1981 : 21-26) have argued persuasively for a view of the school as a "site of struggle" in which different social needs and demands expressed in terms of differing educational "logics" encounter each other and reach some form of

resolution in politically expressed policies. Non-formal education in a labour context may be usefully seen in a similar framework although, because there is no formally expressed national political policy, nor a formal established institution like the school, the conditions of the encounter are somewhat different.

The historical forces acting in the society translate with specific sociologies in relatively unstable institutions which in turn produce specific and contesting educational practices. However, the single most important implication of the British case history rests in the fact that "an educational logic" in non-formal education cannot be fully studied within its own frame of reference only.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOUTH AFRICAN ADULT WORKER EDUCATION IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CHAPTER FOUR

4. SOUTH AFRICAN ADULT WORKER EDUCATION IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

4.1. The Beginnings and their Contexts

The earliest evidence of educational proposals or practices for adult worker education in South Africa come from 1917 and 1919 and from two very different sources.

> "To answer the question "How did socialism first make its presence felt among African workers on the Rand?" we have to go back to the month of July 1917, and into Mr. Neppe's shop on Fox and MacLaren Streets, Johannesburg where, at 8 p.m. one evening, militant white socialists from the International Socialist League came together for the first time to foster socialist activities among African workers on the Rand."
>
> (Johnstone,1979 : 248)

Two years later, on May 16 1919, Professor H.A. Reyburn* gave a public lecture at the University of Cape Town titled "University Education and the Working Class". In the lecture he gives a brief but generally accurate account of the British experience in worker education as it is seen from the University/ W.E.A. point of view. He gives fair representation to the resistance expressed by workers to university initiatives speaking of the "deep rooted suspicion labour organizations have of what has been called the governing class", as well as to hostility from establishment critics.

> "you teach history and economics to miners and engineers? Take care; you will make them discontented and disloyal to us."

/His conclusion....

His conclusion makes the tentative proposal

> "13. I know that it is hard for men in daily toil to spare the time and energy for intellectual work, and that it would be easier were society altered so that men had shorter hours, greater regularity, and higher wages. But I am not concerned with any political or economic issue and I make no prophesies. My point is that such work is possible under existing conditions, for it has been done and is increasingly being done. It may be easier in the future, but it is possible now. I do not say that the movement as it has succeeded in England is thoroughly adapted to South African conditions; that is a fair subject for enquiry. South Africa claims to be unique in so many things. Perhaps the workers do not need education; perhaps they do not desire it. But if in Cape Town they are at all animated by the spirit which has moved so many English, men and women, in recent years, supplying them with new interest and extending the horizon of their lives, it may be possible to develop here in the same or in a modified form that co-operation of the university and the workers which I have tried to outline here."
>
> University of Cape Town Development Scheme 1919

(*Note. I am indebted to my colleague, Douglas Walker, for drawing my attention to this document.)

The immediate interest of these two, all but simultaneous, beginnings is the manner in which they represent the arrival in South Africa, in form and approach virtually unchanged, of the two traditions which formed the basis of British worker education. The contexts in which they made their appearances differ sharply, not only from their British sources, but between themselves. Reyburn speaks with accents of concerned liberalism in the context of the liberal intellectual elite. His comparison of South African and English workers holds, despite his defensive qualification, ("South Africa claims to be unique in so many things"), because he is implicitly equating the University with Oxford or Cambridge, and because he has the white immigrant craft workers in mind, when

/thinking.....

thinking of the project.

The socialists in Mr. Neppe's shop are more obviously and directly involved in an indigenous South African situation and seem less susceptible to being seen to interpret the local questions, through British eyes. However, it may have been that in the African workers they saw the counterparts of the manual labourers of Britain to whom socialism has had a powerful appeal in the 1880's and 90's.

Roux makes a relevant observation

> "Socialism, like Christianity, was a European importation into South Africa. Both the political and trade union wings of the South African Labour Movement were established by immigrants, and they were organized in the same way as were similar bodies and movements in Britain."
>
> (Roux, 1964 : 122)

In observing the points of entry of the British traditions, we are able to see the beginnings of two alternative approaches to the organization of education for South African workers. The subsequent history of educational initiatives is substantially a history of the development, adaptation and interaction of the alternate liberal and radical approaches. The labour contexts of South Africa, however, constitute a field of operation which is vastly different to the conditions of the British working class.

Possibly the central difference between the two contexts lies in the basic conditions under which industrialization occurred in each. Britain had been the "first case" of an industrial revolution. The processes of technical innovation, capital accumulation and investment, the reorganization of methods of production and the creation of a labour force took place from within the society. The cultural and social political structures were slowly remade under the social pressures generated by the economic changes. No prior models of industrial societies were in existence, nor was there any powerful external market either for capital or goods.

/South Africa.....

South Africa, by contrast, had remained an agricultural colonial country until the mineral discoveries of the late nineteenth century. At that point the society was penetrated, from the outside, by the already powerfully developed industrial capitalism of Britain. The colonial order was disrupted by the entry not only of the financial and technical infrastructures of industrial production, but also by new forms of labour and new classes of workers. The fracturing of the colonial patterns of social and economic relations began at two points, Kimberley and the Witwatersrand, but the impact of the new dispensation spread rapidly through the social fabric of the country, generating changes in land tenure, in agriculture, in towns and cities, in transport and communications and, above all, in the market for labour.

Van Onselen's two-volume work, "Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914", focuses directly on the point of impact and traces in great detail the ways in which daily life is restructured as a consequence of the new forms of activity. The description provided of the project says that it

> "seeks to set the experience of selected groups of ordinary people in Johannesburg within the wider context of the industrial revolution that engulfed the Witwatersrand at the turn of the century. By situating these groups within the emerging structures of society and refracting their experience through the processes of class struggle, it seeks to demonstrate how, during these formative decades, the ruling classes gradually came to assert their control over the subordinate classes on the Rand and exercise a powerful influence over where they lived, how they spent their non-working hours, how domestic labour was allocated in their homes and how they were to endure periods of unemployment."
>
> (Van Onselen,Vol.1.1982 :XV1)

A second major theme in the studies is the strategic resistance shown by subordinated groups to the new forces unleashed by the mining industry.

/The resistance....

> "The resistance of the under classes to that shaping process - both at their places of employment and well beyond it (sic) - was at various times culturally informed, subtle, extensive and militant. Formal resistance, as expressed through petitions, deputations, demonstrations, marches and strikes, drew on strands as diverse as the English trade union tradition and Jewish experience of the Bund in Eastern Europe, while less formal resistance, but nonetheless well organized - as manifested in intimidatory displays, assaults or gang activities - could be influenced by aspects of Pedi youth culture, the Zulu regimental system or the ethnic bonds uniting gangsters drawn from Manhattan's lower east side. But what was perhaps most impressive about this working class in the making, was the manner in which its members borrowed, shared and adapted practices drawn from older settings and put them to work in a new environment."
>
> (Van Onselen, 1982 :XV1)

Van Onselen's descriptions give a sense not only of the basic processes of "shaping" and"resistance", but also communicate a strong impression of the extraordinary variety of strategies and modes of resistance which were drawn into the vortex created by the penetration of a powerfully developed industrial capacity. The British trade union tradition is but one of a multitude of influences.

In the circumstances and conditions of the mine labour force, a crucial distinction falls between those who came to the Witwatersrand already equipped with the skills, attitudes and organizational traditions developed in the industrial contexts of Britain, the United States and Australia; and those who came out of the agrarian colonial context of South Africa itself, without skills and without traditions of organization based in industrial conditions. The beginnings of a racial division of labour lie here, but in the years before 1922 this is not the decisive issue. The mines required both skilled and unskilled labour and, in the early period, mine owners were prepared to bargain under pressure with the craft unions of the skilled workers allowing their organized defence of their skills, and their positions, to win for them higher wages and better working conditions than were available to their unskilled fellow workers.

/Decisive.....

Decisive for the mineworkers as a whole was the question of responses to the mine owners attempts to divide the workers and to undermine the position of skilled workers by employing semi and unskilled people at low wages to do as much of the skilled work as they were capable of doing. In a series of complex moves and counter moves, including strike action, a fresh pattern of responses began to emerge. Skilled white miners sought protection from the combined threats posed by the mine owners on the one side, and cheap black labour on the other, through broadening their union organizations to include all white miners and through entering political campaigns for a "civilised labour policy" through the S.A. Labour Party.

This pattern, appearing in the period 1910-1918, is particularly important in considering the issues of worker education because the "militant socialists" referred to above were men who had rejected the whites only policy of the Labour Party,and were determined to reverse the widening split between white and black labour.
The International Socialist League (I.S.L) formed the Industrial Workers of Africa (I.W.A.) which they hoped would become a large general union. The first night school for Africans was established in the I.W.A. in order to teach literacy and to spread Marxism.
At the same time, they endeavoured to persuade white workers of the importance of their approach to the black workers. (Roux,1964 :132).

The early night school of the I.W.A. was the beginning of the radical tradition of worker education in South Africa. Several features of its work are significant indicators of a future role. Firstly its work was among black African people. Secondly it was conceived of as a project within a trade union and political movement. Thirdly, it was confronted by the immediate twin problems of the lack of any formal education in the participants and the need to communicate complex political ideas.

/The immediate.....

The immediate inheritor of the I.W.A. night school was the Communist Party which formed its own night school in 1925 after its own formation in 1921. The I.S.L. was itself absorbed in the Communist Party at its foundation.

At the other end of the social spectrum among the white intellectual elite the proposal presented by Professor Reyburn had failed to produce a commitment to worker education. In its place the University of Cape Town had made tentative moves, through a Committee for Extension lectures, to provide the kind of non-vocational liberal adult education which characterised the British universities outside of their relation with the W.E.A. This audience was largely white, educated and middle class, their content largely dominated by the terms of colonial high culture, and their characteristic procedure was the formal lecture.

Possibly the dominant feature of the total content of the early beginnings of adult education, whether concerned with workers or not, was the very wide gap in perceptions and activities between what counted as "liberal" and what stood for "socialism". The new context of industrial South Africa forced apart the traditions inherited from Britain where they had after a century of work reached a point of intimate contest.

4.2. After 1922: Politics and Labour

Between January and March 1922 the white miners of the Witwatersrand were out on a general strike. The central issue of the strike was the position of white miners. The strike was lost, after being crushed by government action. Miners returned to work at lower wages and with less security than before.

The 1922 strike or 'Red Revolt' had consequences far beyond the immediate weakening of the white miners position in the labour market. The first long term result was the passing of the Industrial Conciliation Act in 1924, which set the pattern of labour relations

/for more.....

for more than fifty years. The Industrial Conciliation Act effected a direct legal division between white and black labour, which was not altered until 1979. The provisions of the act laid down a system of negotiations through Industrial Councils for each industry in order to reach agreement between the leaders of the industry and the leaders of labour, on questions of job levels, wages, conditions of work and settlement of grievances. The Industrial Conciliation Act provisions were explicitly not applied to black African labour. The long term effect of the Industrial Council system has been to draw the white unions into close relations with industrial management, to reduce the militancy of their demands and to provide a system of industrial accommodation between white labour and management at the expense of low-paid black workers.

The second long-term consequence of the failure of the 1922 strike was to draw the white miners still further into the directly political arena. White workers possessed the vote and were prepared to use it to secure their position against what they saw as a black threat. The 1924 Pact government, a coalition of the Nationalist and Labour parties was the immediate consequence. The longer term effects were the enactment of protective legislation guaranteeing the position of white workers against black encroachment. The entrenchment of racial divisions in legislation introduced further complications into the context of black worker organizations and education.

The threat which unskilled black labour had initially presented to white mineworkers had existed primarily because black workers had been available for use in the strategies of the mine owners to reduce costs. Black workers, as migrant labourers, subject not only to the pass laws, and the provisions of the Land Act of 1913, but without organization or representation, were in a position

/vulnerable....

vulnerable to all forms of manipulation and/or harassment. As a body or group they were unable to exercise any form of direct independent power.

The Communist Party, seeking support outside of the established white political structures and looking for contact with black workers, established its own night school.

> "This (the C.P. night school) had been started in 1925 in the Ferreirastown slum, in a Native Church building hired on week nights for the purpose. The building had no electric light. There enthusiastic white communists bent their energies to teaching by candle light, semi-literate Africans to read involved passages in Bukharin's ABC of Communism. The organiser of this school and general factotum in Native work was T.W. Thibedi. He had been a member of the I.S.L. in the old days. For years he had been the only black man in the Party."
>
> Roux, 1964 : 202

The Communist Party school was open about its ideological purposes and its efforts at political/labour organization. It sought to recruit and build up a leader group within the black workers. Students were to be taught not only literacy but political attitudes and interpretations as well and, in consequence, would give their allegiance to the Party.

Lodge comments

> "Political groups sometimes attempted to enhance their following through sharing popular educational concerns. The South African Communist Party's night school programme was a good example of this."
>
> Lodge, 1983 : 117

The attention of the alternative, liberal, tradition, which until the late 1920's had remained well within the confines of the universities and the white cultural elite, was only drawn to the

situation of the black worker when black labour organization had attained a potentially effective independent form. The key circumstance was the founding and growth of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa under Clements Kadalie. Founded in 1919 in Cape Town the I.C.U. rapidly became a focus for the discontent felt by black people as a whole, and under its charismatic leadership it expanded rapidly. By the middle 1920's the movement showed a potential for revolutionary action and it attracted widespread attention. Roux comments, firstly on government spying on the movement and then on the "nervous responses" of other private individuals.

> "In addition to (this) government inspired spying there was interference, more or less well intentioned, which came from large numbers of private individuals who witnessed with increasing nervousness the manifestation of the growing will to unity among the Bantu. It was amazing to see how, almost overnight, so many Europeans, hitherto seemingly indifferent to the plight of the Africans, now emerged as philanthropists, became 'interested in the poor Natives', and wished to 'do something to help them'. Joint Councils were organized, welfare clubs sprang up, missionaries and parsons came out openly with appeals for a Christian attitude towards the Blacks and certain "good people" who had never displayed any interest in African trade unionism now became interested in the internal affairs of the I.C.U. and much concerned for its welfare, which concern they expressed by attempts to influence the policy of Kadalie and other leaders. Among these were religious people, college professors, humanitarians and the like. They saw in the I.C.U. a powerful influence for good, if only those extremists and communists who were leading the organization astray could be eliminated."
>
> Roux, 1964 : 162.

The debunking irony of the comment puts a harsh light on the responses of the "philanthropists", but the force of the point cannot be missed. Lacey makes the general case directly

"A radicalized.....

> "A radicalized labour movement in South Africa that included Africans would be intolerable as it would eventually undermine the forced labour system, destroying with it the very basis of capitalist profitability."
>
> Lacey, 1981 : 3

Once the prospect of the radicalization of black labour appeared to be becoming clearer, the competitive tensions between liberals and radicals described by Bird (1980) increased. Worker education was one important field in which the tension was manifest. Before entering the period of contention (1940's and 50's) it is important to note that in contradistinction to the British case, in South Africa both the liberal and radical groups were acting from outside of the black working class. In a sense both groups were working with fundamentally co-optative strategies though the goals of each were very different.

4.3. Workers and Education Strategies 1940-60

Changes in the economy, in particular the growth of manufacturing industry, and changes in the political awareness of black people after the experience of the I.C.U. produced a changed context for educational work during the 1940's. Lodge identifies the period as a watershed,

> "The 1940's were a watershed in the development of African politics in South Africa, a period in which the massive expansion of the black urban labour force, its increasing deployment in manufacturing industry, the revival of trade unionism and the stimulation of class consciousness all had a radicalising effect on African political organizations....."
>
> Lodge, 1983 : 1

/In the.....

In the changing context there were two principal sites for educational work, involving two different forms of activity and constituting two different sets of educational purposes. One lay in the development of African trade unions; the second lay in the provision of general night schools in the urban areas. In practice there was considerable overlapping between the two forms of activity, but it is important to clarify basic theoretical differences between them.

Bird (1980 : 68) notes the existence of classes both in the I.C.U. and in Max Gordon's unions. No details of the kind of work done are given except the crucial fact that the classes were a part of the union organization. Fannie Klenneman, a teacher in the organization,is quoted

> "Q: Did you have anything to do with night schools?
>
> A: Yes. I did a lot of work. I worked in Max Gordon's organization, the Joint Committee of African Trade Unions, I taught at his schools."
>
> Bird, 1980 : 68

Gordon's organization of trade unions was radical and 'Trotskyite', and in competition with the orthodox Communist Party work in the same field. The unions affiliated to the Council for Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) constituted the most powerful body of organized black labour (119 unions with "a (probably exaggerated) affiliate strength of 158000 members" in 1945 Lodge, 1983 : 18). CNETU was, at leadership level, strongly involved with the Communist Party and it seems probable that the C.P. night school which survived into the 1940's retained some of its function in providing training for union leaders.

The important development surrounding the educational work in the

/trade unions....

trade unions was the direct linkage established between the classes and the organization which they served. Bird says "Education,then, for the radicals, had to be part of an active struggle" (Bird,1980:69) and cites cases of African political and trade union leaders who received their training in the organization classes. This change marks an important shift from the original C.P. night school which served more as a point of contact and recruitment between party people and black workers. In the 1940's the educational work is designed to serve organizational goals and needs.

The same procedure obtains in the later period after the formation of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in 1955. SACTU, as a trade union organization, was linked throughout its existence to the Congress Alliance and it pursued a strategy of linking economic and political issues. Lodge reviews the nature and effect of the linkage and states

> "few of the SACTU's officials were communists and many activists, especially at the level of local committees, had received their organizational training within the trade union rather than the political movement."
>
> (Lodge, 1983 : 198)

The organizational training was likely, in most instances, to be direct and informal, drawing on the immediate experience of particular activities and integrating that with the accumulated knowledge of experienced officials. However, the relationship with the political movement would have acted to place the specific training into the larger contexts of political questions.

The second major site of educational work among black working people during the 1940's and 50's was the "independent" or"non-political" night school. Many of the same people who were involved in the radical organizational work either in the Communist Party or the trade unions also worked in the independent night

/schools.....

schools, but the focus of the activity was substantially different. The night schools defined their student group as black people who were in search of educational "opportunities" as the means of dealing with the pressing problems of their urban living conditions.

Lacey describes the 'vicious circle' in which Africans found themselves trapped in the 1930's.

> "By restricting Africans in the amount of land they could own and through various other coercive means, they (the State) had forced Africans into the labour market. An oversupply of unskilled labour was then created in the towns which repressed African wages still further. Africans were then isolated (in locations) and kept in a degraded position. Denied equal educational and job opportunities, they could be forced to take low-paid jobs and could not bargain for better terms. Once in those jobs they were virtually tied there, because being an unemployed African in the white area was an offence and the threat of being endorsed out as an idle person was constant. To hold out for higher pay could even mean the loss of a job, or not being able to get one in the first place. This in turn could mean being endorsed out of the district or being repatriated to the reserve."
>
> Lacey, 1981 : 242

The educational strategy of the night school was designed as an intervention to break the vicious circle. The educational goals were framed as providing the means for individuals to gain, even minimal, control of their circumstances. The stress fell initially on basic education and basic skills training. Later it was extended to include formal school curricula at the Std.8 level. Less radical and politically directed than the trade union education work, it was nonetheless designed as a response to the processes of exploitation and degradation to which Africans were subject.

/The movement....

The movement began in the Transvaal with the foundation of the African College in 1938. It was followed in 1940 by the opening of the first Mayibuye school. By the mid 1940's, in the atmosphere of general liberalization of policy, the movement grew and became more formally constituted. Similar movements were started in Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Cape Town. In Johannesburg the Federation for Non-European Adult Education was formed and gained support from the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Transvaal Teachers Association, and student groups from the University of the Witwatersrand. Subsidy finance from the municipality was negotiated and proposals for national subsidization were presented. In 1947, 19 night schools in the Johannesburg area received £3400 in subsidy from the municipality. (Bird, 1980 : 73). By 1957 there were 32 schools in the same area.

Bird quotes the following figures as at 1955

"

CENTRE	CONTROLLED BY	NO OF TEACHERS TOTAL	AFR.	WHITE	ENROLMENT	NO.OF SCHOOLS
Johannesburg	J4Cs	160	100	60	3000	32
Cape Town	Cape Non-European Night School Assoc.	214	12	200	1200	12
Cape Town	C.Province Education Department				303	5
Durban	Durban City Council				3500	25
Pieter-Maritzburg	Pietermaritz-burg City Council				1500	5

Schools were also being conducted in Pretoria, Port Elizabeth and East London, as well as throughout the country by various church groups although exact details of these are difficult to find."

(Bird, 1980 : 75)

/The curriculum.....

The curriculum aims of the African College provide useful insight into the nature of the night school project.

> "(a) Teaching of....English Arithmetic, civics and Government - with special emphasis on the native laws and geography, with proposed extension to include Hygiene and Debating and speaking for the higher classes.
>
> (b) To impart unseful knowledge adapted to the needs of the pupils.
>
> (c) Emphasis on imparting as much general knowledge as possible to help the pupils adapt to and understand their present cultural environment.
>
> (d) Solution of special problems and difficulties brought by the pupils or known to be common to the Bantu.
>
> (e) Encouragement of free expression and discussion by the pupils to reveal and clarify their difficulties and attack superstition abd prejudice through discussion and explanation from both sides. In the course of these discussions the pupils will be able to see European approaches and attitudes more clearly when these stand out in contrast to their own."
>
> (Quoted in Bird,1980 : 69)

The approach might be described as basic adult education in a context of philanthropy and self-help. The liberal character of the project is strongly implied in the ideas of "useful knowledge", adapting to and understanding their "present cultural environment", "free expression and discussion" to dispel "superstition and prejudices." (There are in fact several unintended echoes of the philanthropic educational endeavours found in the early phases of British adult education.)

The deeper assumptions beneath the manifest aims are clearly concerned with "adaptation" and "accommodation". The social and economic order are taken as given, though not without critical resistance to some of the manifestations. The task is understood as providing

African working people with the means of coming to terms with conditions as they confront them. At a yet deeper level it can be inferred that an element of self-interest lay near to the core of the liberal endeavour. A vast disaffected African urban population would inevitably place the structures of the society as a whole in jeopardy.

The influences of both radical and liberal movements were removed completely during the period 1950-1967. The Suppression of Communism Act 1950 destroyed whatever was left of C.P. educational endeavour and put a stop to any resurgence that might have occurred. In 1957 all night schools were compelled to register with the Government and to abide by the terms of both the Group Areas Act and the definition of a night school provided by the Government. Under the impact of new regulations for administration and the removal of subsidy finance the liberal movement slowly crumbled, firstly in the "white" areas and then in the African townships. By the late 60's there was little evidence of any night school activity barring isolated examination classes run by Churches.

When, in 1977, the Government launched its own version of night school education, it was very tightly defined as alternative formal schooling for adults. As a programme it has only marginal relevance to the issues of worker education under consideration.

4.4. Conclusion

The traditions of adult worker education in South Africa are, like those of black trade unions, broken and lacking in coherence. The scale of the endeavour is small and the attempts made suffered continual harassment from official sources. Despite this it is possible to pick out several important points which contribute to a total impression. The British case history serves as a useful contrast.

The racial division of labour is certainly the major factor in weakening the potentials for the development of educational work

within the working class as a whole. Skilled workers, because they were white, were drawn upwards into cultural connections with the middle class. Formal schooling for white working class children became available on a free and compulsory basis. The main body of the working class, because it was black, was therefore left without either the formal or non-formal educational opportunities that were available to the British working class.

Educational work among the black workers was identified, therefore, as an important task only by "deviant groups" who rejected the policies of segregation and exploitation, notably communists and liberals. Such groups were predominantly white and without immediate cultural bonds with black workers. In defining their tasks they drew more or less consciously on the traditions inherited from Britain and Europe, rather from any codes or practices inherent in the African vernacular culture. Further, in engaging in educational work they were unable to draw upon any common basis established through formal education.

The contrast with the British case is strong. Both the socialist and the social harmony traditions in Britain drew extensively, though in different ways, on the concepts and experiences of a common culture. For the socialist movement it was the common popular culture of the "free-born Englishman" fertilized by the writings of Paine, Darwin and Marx. For the liberal tradition it was the notion of a "high culture", in particular the inheritance of the Enlightenment in which all men could, potentially, share. In South Africa, without any common cultural base, educational work took on a strongly instrumental cast.

Looking at the South African experience in an educational framework, it is possible to see both the radical and liberal practices as adopting non-formal instrumental approaches though with different emphases and goals. In the radical work the educational character of the engagements is de-emphasised and gradually absorbed into

/directly.....

directly organizational work. Over time the work of training becomes more informal and consequential to the tasks of trade union or political organizing. The curriculum loses its separate definition and the roles of "teacher" and "learner" disappear.

In the liberal night schools the movement is in the other direction. The initial non-formal basic education curriculum changes under pressure towards becoming more like the formal school curriculum for children and the teacher and learner roles become very sharply defined.

In sociological terms the learner in the radical context is defined as a recruit to the movement and the teacher is constituted,not by any particular pedagogic skills or aptitudes, but by his position within the movement. In the liberal night school context the learner is defined as an "outsider" seeking entry. His culture is implicitly devalued against the cultural standards of the teacher. The teacher holds his position primarily because he is in possession of the attitudes and skills of the dominant culture rather than because of any particular educational skill or training.

In the historical perspective liberals and radicals share a common motivation in revulsion at the social condition imposed upon black people. Their courses of action and goals differ according to their interpretation of the best means of challenging and dealing with the conditions of exploitation and degradation.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CAPE TOWN PROJECT AND ITS CONTEXT

THE CAPE TOWN PROJECT AND ITS CONTEXT

Introduction

The original proposal for the Cape Town adult worker education project was addressed to the independent black trade union movement in Cape Town. Discussions were held with four union groups: the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), the General Workers Union (GWU), the Cape Town Municipal Workers Union (C.T.M.W.U.) and the Food and Canning Workers Union (F.C.W.U.)

The reasons for addressing the proposal to these unions lie in the character and purposes of the independent movement. The purpose of this chapter is to set out the basic features of the movement and to discuss the project proposal.

5.1. The Independent Movement

The 1960's represent a major break in the history of labour organization and, by inference, worker education in South Africa. The proscribing of African political organizations and the systematic destruction of their networks of support in the early 1960's, following the Sharpeville crisis, created the illusion of industrial peace. An economic boom followed, created by the inflow of foreign capital largely in the form of investment by multinational corporations in manufacturing industry. The repression of labour organizations and the incentives offered to investors, particularly through the system of "border" industries, introduced significant changes within the economy. Firstly, the overall size and capacity of manufacturing industry increased dramatically and the organization of factory production changed.

Innes has compared the conditions of the 1970's with those of the 1950's

/"Small.....

> "Small factories employing 10 - 20 workers have given have given way to factories employing hundreds and often (in heavy engineering for instance) 2000-3000 workers under a single roof."
>
> (Innes, 1983 : 181)

Drawing out the implications of the change, Innes points out

> "Consequently this early organization (i.e. in the 1950's) occurred at a time when in general the black industrial working class in South Africa was divided into thousands of fragmented factories and it is not altogether surprising that organization occurred largely in those areas where black workers were concentrated - in the townships rather than on the shop floor. Consequently if we are looking for a broad cause of the 1973 Natal industrial workers strike and for the subsequent upsurge in factory organization, we must, in addition to existing factors like low wages, high inflation, etc., also locate these within the context of new and better conditions for working class solidarity and unity based on the shop floor."
>
> (Innes, 1983 : 182)

The entry of foreign corporate capital on a large scale also introduced a number of other new elements. The overall size of the African workforce increased and, at the same time, black people began to advance into semi-skilled and skilled job positions, thereby increasing their potential bargaining potentials. Local operations of foreign based corporations proved to be vulnerable to pressures from two sources. Workers at the European and American plants of the same corporation saw their own positions as potentially jeopardised by the low wages being paid in South African subsidiaries and were able to apply pressure on corporate management. Similarly shareholders in the corporations, alerted to the political climate surrounding South African investment, were able to pressure managements to make changes and improvements in working conditions for black people. Both of these forms of pressure were reflected back into South Africa in the form of instructions to local managements

/and pressures....

and pressures on government labour policies.

Under the growing pressures the existing labour relations legislation revealed crucial weaknesses. The cornerstone of the system, the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 as amended 1956, provided for the regulation of relations and conditions of whites, "Coloureds" and "Indians" through Industrial Councils. For blacks the Bantu Labour Relations Act 1953 provided for an entirely different system of bargaining through in-plant works Committees. In practice the system for whites, "Coloureds" and "Indians" worked to secure them substantial benefits while the black "system" was seldom put to any form of use. Black labour, without the right to strike and with few other sanctions, was kept in a position of vulnerability and powerlessness throughout the 1960's.

The extent of the changes which had taken place beneath the "peace" of the 1960's became visible in the Durban strikes of 1973 when 60,000 to 100,000 workers demanded better pay and conditions. The strikes were highly significant for at least three reasons. They were the result of spontaneous action spreading rapidly from factory to factory and across industry boundaries; they were not suppressed by police or para-military action despite their threatening appearance; and they were successful in gaining,not only increases in wages, but in reshaping management and government attitudes. One of their most significant results was the final impetus they gave to the founding of the new independent unions.

> "It was out of this wave of working class militancy that 5 distinct African trade union groupings were to emerge: firstly T.U.C.S.A. with its 7 parallel unions; secondly, the Black and Allied Workers Union; thirdly the Urban Training Project; fourthly the Trade Union Advisory Co-ordinating Council (now FOSATU); and, finally, the Western Province Workers Advice Bureau in the Western Cape (Western Province General Workers Union)."
>
> (Bonner & Webster, 1979 : 6)

Trade Unions do not arise out of sudden impulses or actions and much preparatory work had been done to make the formations possible in 1973/4. This will be considered in a later section since it bears closely on educational questions..

Further effects of the strikes, and continuing worker militancy in other areas,were to put intense pressure on the black bargaining system. Works Committees rose in number from 23 in 1973 to 239 in 1975. Liaison Committees, introduced after 1973, as an advance on the Works Committee, in order to solve what was thought to be a "communications" problem,rose from 118 to 1751 in the same period. (Figures in Bonner and Webster 1979). Furthermore the pressures and incentives placed on black workers to join a "parallel" union increased. The growth of the independent movement was a direct challenge to the existing system of regulating relations since their central purpose was to institute direct negotiation procedures with employers. The basic strategy of the new unions was to organize within a factory in order to secure majority support which would provide the basis for recognition agreements between the management and the union.

The measure of the success of the new unionism was the appointment in 1977 by the Government of the Wiehahn Commission with a brief to to investigate and make recommendations on labour legislation. Reporting in 1979, the Commission noted the variance between the two systems of labour relations and identified that as a central source of problems in the field.

The Commission produced a comprehensive reassessment of unregistered black unions noting inter alia that

- African unions would continue to grow
- they had become a focus of pressure from abroad
- they were not subject to discipline and control
- they would prejudice existing registered unions
- they would be able to undermine the existing statutory system by forcing negotiations outside of its terms and procedures.

/In consequence.....

In consequence the chief recommendation was that full recognition be given to the right of African workers to form and join trade unions and that such unions be encouraged to register with the Department of Manpower and participate in the Industrial Council system.

In 1981, at the time of the proposed project, the independent unions were still engaged in the assessment of the consequences of the government's acceptance of the Wiehahn report. They were especially sensitive to the issue of registration and incorporation within the Industrial Council system, fearing it as a system of control which would rob them not only of direct access to management, but their organizational unity and strength.

This latter issue received the most attention since at risk was the common participation and direct democracy of the organizations, in which leaders were made accountable to members; the Industrial Council system was seen as a part of a process through which the union leadership would be separated from ordinary members and reconstituted as part of a joint problem-solving team working finally for management.

These issues formed the immediate context of the proposal.

5.2. Educational Initiatives and the Independent Movement

Educational work, of various kinds, played a significant role in the development of the independent movement from a point before the formation of the first of the new unions. Prior to 1973 it was student Wages Commissions at the three main English speaking universities which pioneered the systematic exploitation of the possibilities of applying pressure on local managers through the publication abroad of information on wage levels. Out of these research activities came contact not only with ordinary workers, but also experienced unionists from the SACTU period. Students became involved in labour work and frequently found that the most

/appropriate.....

appropriate form of entry to the field was in an educational role.

The S.A.Labour Bulletin discussed issues of university involvement in an editorial in 1974 (written by Richard Turner, in all probability). The article distinguishes three kinds of involvement - that of the student qua student; that of the academic staff member and that of the graduate who enters the movement as a career. The writer is cool about the first.

> "They tend to be young, inexperienced and impatient. They also often think they know more than they actually do. Most university students, Black or White, come from a middle class background in which they have no experience of sustained and unpleasant work.....
>
> (S.A.L.B., 1974, Vol 1 No.2 : 4)

On university staff the view taken is that they are unlikely to have the time or the inclination to organize workers in their spare time, but they do have "special skills" to offer in the fields of teaching, research and writing.

In the case of graduate students entering the labour movement as a career, the argument is quite different.

> "University graduates who come into the labour movement are quite a different kettle of fish. They are people who have a wide range of jobs open to them. If they choose poorly paid and exhausting jobs it is only because they are highly motivated and have a sense of social duty.... It seems to us that such people can make a valuable long term contribution to the movement."
>
> (S.A.L.B.,1974, Vol 1 No.2 : 4)

The article concludes with a general point about the vast need for workers education and hopes for better relations between Universities and Trade Unions.

The discussion is important in the identification it makes of the value of the graduate student entering the movement.

/In 1974.....

In 1974 there were "no more than half a dozen" but the numbers expanded rapidly until the group became a major factor in the growth of the movement.

The relations between graduates entering the movement and the new unions have been fully discussed by Johann Maree in his article "Democracy and Oligarchy in Trade Unions (Social Dynamics 8(1) 1982: 41-52). After a theoretical account of the 'Iron Law of Oligarchy' and the countervailing 'Iron Law of Democracy', Maree focuses on the independent unions.

> "The independent unions under consideration in this paper all owed their existence to organizations other than trade unions which were started in the early 1970's and were oligarchic in character in so far as their relationship with African workers was concerned. The General Workers Union (G.W.U.) commenced as the Western Province Workers Advice Bureau (W.P.W.A.B.) while F.O.S.A.T.U. in the Transvaal had its roots in the Industrial Aid Society (I.A.S.) and the Unions of the Consultative Commitee of Black Trade Unions owed theirs mainly to the Urban Training Project (U.T.P.)."
>
> (Maree, 1982 : 45)

Maree cites two main reasons for this pattern of formation. Firstly, safety, in a period of continuing state hostility to Black trade unions and, secondly, the absence of pre-existing mass industrial organizations following the destruction of the S.A.C.T.U. in the 1960's.

The problem for the founding organizations was the transition from the small controlling group of intellectuals to the democratic shop floor based organization of the African workers.

Maree suggests two conditions for the effective development of democracy and for the control of unions to be in the hands of the workers themselves.

"Although....

> "Although the creation of democratic structures in trade unions is an indispensable prerequisite for democracy to exist in the unions, it is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition. What is also required is that workers in the unions must have the capacity to take control of the structures."
>
> (Maree :1982 : 48)

In fulfilling the second condition the education and training of workers is decisive. In assessing the experience of the different organizations (I.A.S., W.P.W.A.B., U.T.P.) in this area, Maree notes three significant features; the importance of experiential learning on the shop floor and in the organization, the resources allocated by each group to training activity (a decline in W.P.W.A.B, some continuity in I.A.S., and a relatively high sustained level in U.T.P.) and the misapplication of much of the early political and ideological education to worker experience and interests.

In his conclusion he points out

> "The force behind the democratisation of the unions was the commitment of the intellectual and other leaders to democracy rather than (as in the cited post 1960 British example) workers impelling democratic practices into the unions. The difference was probably due to the very undeveloped nature of the African working class in South Africa, particularly as far as formal school education was concerned. That was why the promotion of workers' capacities to seize hold of their own organizations was one of the crucial tasks that faced intellectuals and other leaders in the independent unions in the 1970's."
>
> (Maree : 1982 : 52)

The focus given here to the internal development of the independent unions should not obscure their 'external' achievements. The Wiehahn Report and the subsequent government decisions to recognise the movement were themselves significant indicators of their strength and, though designed as measures of containment, have proved in the

/circumstances....

circumstances of increased African militancy to be significant concessions.

> "The reforms have opened up space and have provided the black working class with the opportunity to make real gains: firstly, growth in numbers and organizational consolidation; secondly confidence expressed in assertive strike action."
>
> Rob and Lynne Lambert, 1983 : 219

The circumstances of the African labour movement moving, for the first time in South African labour history towards full maturity (all previous developments having been disrupted by state action) and working intensively at the resolution of internal problems of organization and control, formed the precise context for the Cape Town project proposal.

Before proceeding to a critique of the proposal it is appropriate to reflect back upon the South African traditions of adult worker education and to note the way in which the endeavours of the intellectual groups in the 1970's fitted into and, to a considerable degree, fulfilled the designs of the radical tradition. Their educational concerns, as reflected in methods and content were with the effective training of a working class leadership within the trade unions. Institutionally, they followed the line that the appropriate goals and location for the training activity were to be found within the trade unions themselves. However, while they adopted and gave their commitment to the social goals of the African working class movement, the question of their social roots in the White middle class (with the full benefits of education in particular) remained something of a problem, though a problem of which they themselves were aware and which they took steps to counter.

In the early phase of the movement there was some conflict, however, within at least one of the intellectual groups (the Institute for Industrial Education in Durban which later became the Trade Union Advisory and Co-ordinating Commiteee and then the nucleus of F.O.S.A.T.U.) over the issue of "broad" education for ordinary workers and "training" for small groups of potential leaders.

/At the centre.....

At the centre of this issue lay a particular form of the debate about the role and function of educational work among workers. The I.I.E. was established to provide a "formal" educational training by correspondence and tutorial work. Diplomas were to be issued and validated by an external examining body. The curriculum was designed to take the student, who was defined as an ordinary factory worker, through the basic structures and processes of industrial organization, with the aim of giving him a critical understanding of the various roles and functions of management, the factory and the trade union. In content the programme was clearly radical in intent; in procedure the approach was more evidently liberal since it was directed towards providing the means of critically understanding and acting in immediate conditions.

Before the programme had been fully implemented, it was challenged by critics within the I.I.E. who were interested in less formal, more integrated educational work designed to recruit and train leaders of the new unions. This assertion renewed the characteristic approach of the radical tradition of placing educational work inside the context of organizational necessities.

The I.I.E. debate reinforces the sense of the power of the organizational context to shape and define the character of educational work. The radical approach to training arises out of the pressure of the organizational needs and it displaces a more consciously "educational" plan.

In the period when the I.I.E. was planning its correspondence and tutorial Diploma programme, contact was made with the Centre for Extra Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town to explore the possibility of the Centre engaging in the provision of tutorial support and library resources. No tutorials were given but in 1977 an evening class in Trade Unionism was offered and successfully completed. I.I.E. workbooks formed part of the handout materials of the course.

It was in this context that the 1981 proposal was made.

/5.3. The Project.....

5.3. The Project Proposal : Analysis

The proposal, titled University involvement in Worker Education, drafted by Johann Maree and myself in March 1981, sets out the basic rationale for engagement in fairly brief terms.

> "1. Intellectual skills have a valid and important part to play in the development of the labour movement. In fact, the success of the independent labour movement in the 70's and 80's owes a great deal to the intellectual leadership of the progressive union organisers.
>
> 2. It is important that the intellectual capabilities of the unions should be extended to a broader base to include worker leaders, shop stewards and rank and file members. The more comprehensive and acute their understanding of the political economy of South Africa, the nature of monopoly capitalism, the economics of the factory, managerial strategies in pursuit of profits and control of labour are, the more incisively workers will be able to act.
>
> 3. The unions are often too caught up in day to day struggles at the workplace to devote the necessary resources, energy and time on an educational programme even though they are often acutely aware of the need for such a programme. On the other hand the university could provide the required resources.
>
> 4. However, any education of workers must take place in consultation with, and the approval and co-operation of, the unions concerned. The educational programme would have to be planned jointly and be tailored to meet the needs of the workers and unions. In cases of disagreement the unions would have the final say over the programme.
>
> 5. Educational programmes mounted by the university must not be on matters pertaining directly to union policy, strategy or methods of organising unless the unions directly request the university for such educational training. In principle the courses should be of such a nature that they widen and deepen workers' understanding of economic, social and political issues. Below are outlined some courses that could be offered. "

/There.....

There are three points of immediate significance contained in the rationale. Firstly, there is a clear implicit commitment to the independent labour movement. Secondly, there is an implicit interpretation of present conditions within the movement. Thirdly, there is a strategic presentation of the case for university involvement. Taken separately, and together, these points provide a means of exploring the significance of the approach made by the university.

The commitment

The document points directly, in paragraph 1, to "the success of the movement" and all that follows is designed to expand and build on that success. "Incisive action" is the terminology used in paragraph 2 to give definition both to the success itself, and to the ultimate goal of any educational work. The commitment, which forms the basis of the proposal, is to a continuation and extension of the established record of the independent movement in taking action to change the conditions of workers. However, within the given commitment there is an unclarified ambiguity surrounding the nature of the action and its contexts and purposes. A major theme in the history of labour organization has been the relationship between industrial organization and political action. Specific unions and groups of unions have taken different stands on the question and a good deal of controversy has surrounded the different approaches adopted. Even within the independent movement itself there have been unions (e.g.G.W.U.) which have paid greater attention to the mobilization of workers around "political" questions (e.g. the homelands, migrant labour and the pass laws, police powers, community organization etc.), and there have been others (notably F.O.S.A.T.U.) which have placed much greater emphasis on the organization of workers at the place of work, for action on factory and industry issues (dismissals, grievance

/procedures.....

rocedures, health and safety, wages, benefits etc.). The debate within the independent movement has been more over questions of strategy than over the long term political goals of the Black working class, on which there is agreement. However, within the T.U.C.S.A. unions and in the unaffiliated unions, the question of political orientation and goals assumes more serious proportions.

In making the commitment to "success" and to worker "action" the proposal avoids the issue of the goals of action, leaving the political orientation and goals implicitly within the direction of the unions themselves. The proposed knowledge areas (paragraph 2) do suggest, however, that there is an overall "socialist" orientation to the proposal.

The Interpretation of Present Conditions

The implicit interpretation of present conditions within the movement lies in the idea of extending "the intellectual capabilities of the unions to a broader base to include worker leaders, shop stewards and rank and file members". The interpretation is interesting because it assumes that there already is a stable and effective leadership group within the unions, and it is plain that this group is the "intellectual leadership" referred to in paragraph 1. The "problem" therefore which the proposal defines and addresses is that of the gap between the intellectual leadership and the other parts of the union organization. And that particular problem or need is defined in terms of a need for "intellectual skills" and an extension of the "intellectual capabilities of the unions".

The relationship between the interpretation offered and the issues of democratic or oligarchic organization is not difficult to see. Educational work is identified as having a contribution to make to resolving some of those problems.

/The strategic.....

The strategic presentation of the case for University involvement

The proposal is a highly strategic document. The order and manner in which the basic commitment is given and the interpretation of needs is made, is designed to anticipate the anxieties and questions of the union leadership groups. The tone is reassuring and respectful of the positions and achievements of the intellectual leadership. The interpretation and definition given to the problem, presents it as a structural, organizational and historical issue, and not the consequence of the failure of any individuals or groups. The terms in which the definition is couched invite the assent of union officials.

In paragraph 3 the crux of the strategic approach is spelled out in terms of "resources". The unions lack time and resources to meet the problem whereas the university, acting on the basis of the given commitment and sensitivity to the needs, will be able to marshal the required resources.

In paragraphs 4 and 5 a number of crucial reassurances are provided on questions of planning, design, content and control. Perhaps the most important feature of these reassurances is that they are offered to the leadership. The implicit messages of the two paragraphs are that there is no intention to weaken, subvert or loosen the authority and direction of the leadership. The emphasis falls rather on carrying out what the leadership is unable (through shortage of resources) to accomplish for itself.

The strategic shape of the document, therefore, is to negotiate with the leader groups an access arrangement in order to carry further their own educational aims.

General Critique of the Rationale

The argument developed earlier in this thesis in relation to

/British....

British and South African worker education provide the basis for a general critique of the proposed relationship between the university and the unions of the independent movement as it appears in the rationale.

It is a hybrid form of university adult worker education which is being proposed; hybrid in the sense that it attempts to mix the focus and criteria which we have seen developing in the liberal and radical movements in worker education.

The most obvious points of hybridization are in the proposal for the university to provide resources in an educational programme which in effect will be organizationally linked to a specific group of trade unions. The radical intentions are plain. In terms of social goals the programme is intended to enhance the capacity of the unions for action. Institutionally it is the union which is made the dominant context. Educational goals are established in terms of the requirements of the union and are seen as making a contribution to the effective development of the unions, and the labour movement, as institutions in the broad sense. In terms of organization the course proposal bids for joint planning and design, but yields that position to the more obviously union-centred position defined in the idea of a course "tailored" to meet the needs of the workers and the unions; and by placing the "final say" in the hands of unions.

The educational content and method described in the proposal lay stress on the radical interpretation of South African labour history and a similarly radical analysis of the modern South African economy, thus giving the further assurance of the character of the proposed course.

However, despite all of these features which conform closely to what we have seen as the major criteria of the radical traditions of worker education there are present and implicit within the

/rationale.....

rationale, aspects which really form part of the alternative liberal tradition.

The most obviously "liberal" elements arise out of the fact that the proposal seeks to place, within the union organizational context at the point where informal training takes place, (i.e. between the experienced leadership and the ordinary members, who are taking on leadership roles and functions), a relatively formal, educationally defined, plan of teaching and learning.

In the curriculum plan the teachers are emphatically defined as in possession of authoritative knowedge and the learners are constituted as individuals seeking the abstracted knowledge relevant to a critical understanding of their circumstances. Both learner and teacher roles are strongly defined in terms of knowledge and not in terms of organizational relationships.

It is precisely this element in the proposal which necessitates the repeated reassurances which the document gives that there is no conflict of interests between the proposers and the union leadership.

The ambiguity implicit in the proposal can be focussed in the description of the basic aim of the course.

> "the courses should be of such a nature that they widen and deepen workers' understanding of economic, social and political issues."

The phrase "widen and deepen" contains the ambiguity because it proposes simultaneously two forms of learning process. One form is that the learner gains a deeper, fuller understanding of the knowledge necessary for him to act <u>within</u> the framework of knowledge, values and commitments of the movement - i.e. he becomes more

/aware.....

aware and conscious of his class position, his tasks as a member of the labour movement and of the political goals of the working class. (This form of learning would be roughly analogous to the practice of the Labour Colleges in the British context or the radical schools of the South African labour movement).

The second form of learning implicit in "widen and deepen" is that the learner develops a fuller framework of understanding which allows him to gain a critical perspective on the preoccupation of the movement of which he is a member. In this second instance the gaining of knowledge is a consideration prior to membership of the movement. "Action" remains the goal but the forms of action and organization may arise from sources outside of the detailed commitments of the existing union organization.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the proposal as a whole in the light of the discussions which have preceded it in this study, we can conclude that it was an attempt to take to their limit the "liberal" values of the University and to recast the traditional university provision as far as possible within the mould of a separate institution. The tension set up by this attempt was to be managed, first of all through the Centre for Extra Mural Studies within its mandate for providing educational opportunities for those sectors of society which are unable to benefit from attendance at the University as regular students and, second, through the actions of the two individuals concerned. In this way the liberal commitment to equality of access to knowledge was to be interpreted as the mandate for the provision of radical knowledge content within a radical institutional framework for a particular social purpose.

/As I....

As I have attempted to show, the proposal contains within it both the radical definition and emphasis as well as an inevitable residue of liberal assumptions about education. The distinction might well be finally, albeit crudely, grasped in the fact that the proposal remains ultimately committed to education rather than to training, although it attempts to impose strong boundaries to the concept of education.

5.4. A Comparative Reference Point. The University of Witwatersrand Programme

A valuable and illuminating critical reference point for the Cape Town Project proposal can be obtained by reference to a similar, though more ambitious, project launched by three intellectuals through the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of the Witwatersrand during the same period.

The historical roots of the Witwatersrand programme were very similar to those present in Cape Town. From the University three academics who had had close personal involvements with the early beginnings of the independent movement sought to negotiate, within the structure of the University and by using the mandate of the Centre for Continuing Education, the possibility of holding three week residential courses for trade union officials and members.

A major difference between the two programmes was that the Wits academic group had established a strong linkage with the F.O.S.A.T.U. unions and had reached agreement that the courses would be provided exclusively for FOSATU on their express stipulation that the University, through the Centre for Continuing Education, signed a contract with FOSATU for the provision of the courses.

/Several.....

Several courses were held during 1981 and 1982 and were judged by both the academics and the union officials to be highly successful. However, towards the end of 1982, the University called on the Centre for Continuing Education to suspend the programme and to revoke the agreement. The formal point at issue appears to have been that the contract, because it gave exclusive preference to FOSATU, infringed the University commitment to educational provision open to all. It is possible, though not particularly profitable at this point, to speculate on the informal and undisclosed questions which gave impetus to the decision. The conclusion is plain enough even in formal terms. The University required the courses to be accountable to its criteria of provision and refused to acknowledge the validity of the FOSATU criteria.

Of particular interest in the Wits case are the theoretical reflections on the general issue made by one of the participants in the FOSATU programme (Webster, : 1982). In discussing a "social science of liberation" Webster notes that the attempt to define a new form of academic freedom rests not on the traditional "negative emphasis of no state interference" but on 'a radical commitment to the dangerous truth which serves the people'.

He continues the point

> "In essence it is being proposed that intellectuals need to link their theory/knowledge more clearly to the practical activity taking place among the majority of South Africans."
>
> (Webster, 1982 : 7)

and the case which he discusses focuses on the FOSATU programme.

> "The relationship between theory as a conceptual structure and practice.
>
> What does this mean? It does not mean that intellectuals provide a set of political formulas for action or a science that allows you to predict the future which you then take to the masses outside the university. It does not mean, in other words, that you tell people what to think!

/For me.....

> "For me, what it means is that the task of a social science of liberation is to provide people who have been excluded from access to university education, an opportunity to learn from their own practice, to learn from their mistakes and their successes. They learn by being given an opportunity to reflect and conceptualise their experience. This can either be done in the university or, preferably, in the communities where the men and women live and work. Thus our task is to provide people with the systematic opportunity to learn from their own experience by reflecting on it, and at the same time providing them with new concepts that explain that experience. The Labour Studies Programme run through the CCE is an attempt to do this with worker leaders in FOSATU. Importantly, it is run jointly by workers in FOSATU and academics at Wits. An attempt is being made to ensure a degree of worker control over the course. The university hopes to be able to run similar courses for other independent unions, either jointly with FOSATU, or separately, depending on the organisation's desire."
>
> (Webster, 1982 : 7 - 8)

On the problems of organizational linkage, of locating educational goals within the social goals of "external" institutions, and of the resulting tension between two forms of accountability, Webster is explicit -

> "The formulating of policy in any organisation is the task of that organisation and those who are members of it. However, the existence of party lines, or attempts to impose them on theoretical-scientific questions, imposes unacceptable constraints on scientific work. Discipline is an essential element of organisation but it can be abused as a concept if it is used to impose certain ideas on people rather than establishing agreement through a structure. In other words, attempts to establish practical links with organisations outside the university place the academic in a contradictory position. They are caught between their commitment to open debate in the university (and pressures to publish their work in professional journals) and the discipline imposed by involvement with organisations."
>
> (Webster, 1982 : 10)

/Webster's.....

Webster's effort to resolve the contradiction rests on two foundations. The first is a commitment to

> "the value of social science as an intellectual activity within liberation."

The word "within" in this phrasing earns a very strong, but not entirely clear, emphasis.

The general implication is plain enough in the conviction that intellectual activity is a value which any action for liberation cannot afford to be without. There can be no disagreement on this. "Within" further implies some form of organic relationship between intellectual activity and practical work for liberation, but it does not specify the forms that relationship can take.

To this foundation Webster adds a further basic commitment

> "It involves a commitment to the university as the central arena of one's work."

The rationale for this second commitment is neither entirely clear, nor logically necessary, though it is an obvious and fair inference that the commitment to the university as the "central arena" results from the need to maintain the open debate which lies at the root of intellectual activity.

In the terms of the earlier discussions both of the historical background and the Cape Town proposal, this commitment stands as a powerful endorsement of the "liberal" position.

The crucial modification of the "liberal" position which Webster introduces as the second foundation block of his effort to resolve the contradiction is a view of "contradictory class location within class relations" which intellectuals occupy.

In addressing this problem, Webster confronts directly the issues of social roots and social location which have shaped with such force so much of the historical record of adult worker education.

/His argument....

His argument is that intellectuals

> "do not have a specific class identity in their own right; their class character is determined strictly by their location between classes."

If this point can be established it is a question of major significance since it counteracts the interpretation of intellectual work. which appears to have shaped much of the educational history referred to above.

There are problems with the formulation. There is an unspecified shift in the argument between "the university" as an institution and "intellectuals" as a group; the latter are without "specific class identity" while the former, at least in contemporary South Africa, surely has, as an institution, specific class location and function. If the intellectuals make, as Webster suggests, a commitment to the university as the central arena of their work, it would appear that they were choosing and affirming a particular class location. By contrast, it could be pointed out that intellectuals who chose to make the labour movement their central arena were affirming a different class location and function.

Webster is himself aware of the difficulty since he goes on to address the issue of the university and of academic work -

> "An important feature of the 'petty bourgeois' nature of academic work is its semi-autonomous character. This relative autonomy provides the social scientist with space to challenge dominant ideas in society and engage in serious theoretical work. The basis on which this autonomy can be defended is the concept of academic freedom. Academic freedom redefined in a positive rather than a negative way must be an essential part of a social science of liberation."
>
> (Webster, 1982 : 11)

/In essence....

In essence this description attempts again to modify the 'liberal' view, taken earlier in the argument, of the university as an arena of open debate and intellectual activity. The important modification rests on the ideas of the"semi-autonomous character of academic work" and the "space" which this provides for radical work.

However, this conclusion fails to resolve the contradictory situation of university intellectuals in their attempts to work outside the academic milieu. The "relative autonomy" and the "space" rest, not on the lack of specific class identity of intellectuals, but on the tolerances present within the middle class liberal ethos of the university. They arise not because intellectuals are located between classes but at a point where different class interests meet and overlap. The overlap produces a blurring of the lines of demarcation between the interests, making possible the kind of limited engagements visible in the projects being considered.

It is perhaps significant that Webster's concluding paragraph defining the critical issues remains almost entirely focussed within the university.

> "This argument has nothing to do with protecting the income privileges of academics. The critical issues are control over one's work, censorship, race and sex discrimination and participation in decision making. Serious theoretical production cannot take place under conditions of bureaucratic control. After all, the university is, like all capitalist institutions, a contradictory institution and therefore a site of struggle. The problem for a social science of liberation is not to abandon social science but to transform it."
>
> (Webster, 1982 : 11)

In general terms it seems that though Webster defines and confronts the

/problems.....

problems with especial clarity he is unable to resolve fully the difficulties in a new theory of action for academic intellectuals. The attempt to recast the liberal tradition of the universities into forms of radical action in other organizations, without leaving the university base, remains, theoretically, problematic.

The purpose of both the Wits and the Cape Town project was formed at the point of blurring where the interests of two antagonistic classes overlapped and it was part of the assumptions of both academic groups that they would be able to act across the line of antagonisms and contradiction because they were themselves not part of the conflict. In the Wits case the University re-asserted its specific class character in suspending the programme. In Cape Town the proposal met with no response from the intended organizations and found practical effect only in a very different and unexpected form.

/CHAPTER SIX.....

CHAPTER SIX

EVALUATION OF THE CAPE TOWN COURSE

6.1. Educational Evaluation: Themes and Practices

6.2. The Foundations of the Course

6.3. Formative Processes within the Learning Group

6.4. The Progress of the Course

CHAPTER SIX

EVALUATION OF THE CAPE TOWN COURSE 1981

Chapter Six of this study is constituted by an evaluation of the course given for the Bakery Employees Union in the Centre for Extra Mural Studies, University of Cape Town, between September and November 1981.

Evaluation has become a significant and potent term in the vocabulary of educational studies and its meanings cannot be simply assumed in even the most traditional and formal contexts. The range of meanings implied in the term broadens considerably when it is used in relation to non-formal educational projects, and in the case under consideration, as the preceding discussions readily demonstrate, there are manifold factors which call for consideration. In an important sense Chapters 3 - 5 of this study have already introduced major evaluation questions through the exploration of historical roots and thematic developments. The purpose of Chapters 6 and 7 will be to focus on the empirical reality of the course as it was given and, on the basis of the observations made, to seek to explain why it was that the course took the specific forms and meanings that it did. In the process of explanation the enquiry into background themes and issues will be used as part of the explanatory framework.

Obviously there are difficulties associated with this approach since the temptation will always be present to "read" the events of

/the course....

the course in terms of the background enquiry. There are two main safeguards against falling into this particular error. The first is that the study will utilize as effectively as possible the theories of educational evaluation which have been developed within educational studies, particularly over the past decade. The second rests in the bona fides of the research. The study as a whole has no case to prove, nor even a particular thesis to advance. Its purpose, from the beginning, has been to discover what was happening on the course. It would be absurd to give an arbitrary interpretation to the events of the course, since it would defeat the purpose of the whole study. The study is open ended and it is in the direct interest of all that the relationship between the developing explanatory framework and the account of the course to be given here, be as critical and multi-sided as possible.

6.1. Educational Evaluation: Themes and Practices

Definitions of evaluation abound. Some are simple and direct, stressing the inevitability and naturalness of the process of evaluation. Skager, for example

> "Evaluation is an experientially grounded activity carried out in a systematic and orderly manner."
>
> (Skager,1978 : 25)

or Hamilton

> "Illuminative evaluation seeks to open out an educational situation to intelligent criticism and appraisal."
>
> (Hamilton,1976 : 39)

or Ruddock

> "Education is mainly a social process. Most of it is a process between people, between teacher and student, or is the outcome of such relationship in private study. Evaluation requires investigation of this process and it is therefore a form of social research."
>
> (Ruddock,1981 : 22)

/Even within....

Even within the more formal contexts of organized systems of schooling the definitions of evaluation retain something of this sense of it being a developed form of ordinary thinking.

Stenhouse

> "Evaluation is concerned with the explication of the relation between a curriculum, the contextual variables in a school and the teaching situation, psychological factors in pupils and teachers and the effects obtained. It attempts to evaluate the relationship between the curriculum (the content methods bundle) or a (relatively) controlled variable and the uncontrolled variables in the individual settings in which the curriculum is implemented. Evaluation, in short, is not product testing."
>
> (Stenhouse, 1977 : p.113)

Even the classic foundation statement of Tyler on which the edifice of educational systems-theory was built, is simple and firm.

> "The process of evaluation is essentially the process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually being realized by the program of curriculum and instruction."
>
> (Tyler,1949 : p.106)

However, the apparent clarity and simplicity of these statements obscures a number of complex questions which have formed the substance of a lengthy debate about the theory and practice of evaluation. At the root of the debate are differing views about the nature and proper definition of educational practice. One party to the debate subscribes to the view that educational practice can, and should properly, be defined as an autonomous system which, on the basis of analysis and decision, sets its own educational goals and develops practical strategies to implement and achieve the stated goals. Evaluation, in this argument, is the testing to see whether the goals have actually been achieved.

/This view.....

This view does not deny relationship between educational practice and socio-cultural circumstances but it does insist that, to carry out effective educational work, the learning activity which is desired requires to be defined in terms of an autonomous system.

Tyler's work (see quotation above) forms the foundation of this approach and, following the publication of the book in 1949, his influence spread until it became the dominant and orthodox view of educational planning and evaluation. The value of his approach lay in the emphasis given to purposeful, explicit, measurable educational practice.

The opposing argument in the debate cannot be easily connected with a single influential figure or argued case. It arose rather from the continuing perception that the measurement of achieved pre-specified objectives might not constitute the most effective way of understanding what was taking place in any educational activity. The notion of the "unintended consequences" of a practice assumed important significance.

> "Much has been written about the importance of identifying "unintended consequences" associated with instruction. It is particularly easy to miss such consequences when goals are spelled out in advance in terms of relatively specific learning objectives and where the information collected in the evaluation reflects only those pre-determined objectives. Often relatively little is learned when this approach is taken."
>
> (Skager, 1978 : 26)

An interest in the unintended consequences of an activity arose out of a radically different interpretation of the nature and definitions of educational practice and of the function of the teacher/instructor. In this view education is a process both wider than and more heterogenous than anything that can be defined

/by an.....

by an autonomous learning-system analgous to an industrial production plant. There might, in the alternative view, be specific formal learning/teaching activities based on instruction but the educational effects of the total activity would be much wider - subject in Stenhouse's terms to the multiple "variables" of the school and pupil contexts.

In the orthodox Tyler model the teacher is the operator-manager of the system. His goals are efficiency and effectiveness in operation and the purpose of evaluation is to improve performance through the elimination of negative effects. By contrast in the alternative perspective the teacher is a learner/researcher engaged in social practice (c.f. Ruddock 1981). His goal is to learn more about the work he is doing and, through improved understanding of the full effects of the practice, to develop the quality of educational work.

It is not difficult to see that the admission of the importance of "unintended consequences" in the practice of evaluation brings with it a severe problem. Briefly it is the question of a methodology or methodologies which will allow the evaluator to grasp in an orderly and systematic manner the wide range of significant happenings and their meanings. It is broadly true to say that the theoretical literature of the so-called 'new wave' evaluation has been dominated by this major question and contains a number of strategies and approaches towards its solution (e.g. Goal free Evaluation, Case Study, Action Research).

Within the broad scope of possible areas of attention there have been two dominant concerns. The first is concerned with values.

> "The special nature of evaluation is closely tied to the appraisal of desirability. But in order to make such appraisals, information and evidence must be interpreted in terms of some value system. It has been common in such evaluation practice to ignore the underlying value base as if grounds for establishing desirability were self-evident and universal."
>
> (Skager R.,1978 : 24)

Evaluation based on Tyler's positivistic model made a virtue of excluding value considerations other than the assumed importance of efficiency and effectiveness. Once that framework was challenged by the more reflexive methods of evaluation, the issue of value became of major importance. In the present study the effort undertaken in earlier chapters has been concerned with questions of values. By exploring the historical roots of worker education in their social contexts, I have endeavoured to show two traditions basing themselves upon different value assumptions and organizing their practice in terms of those values. Part of the overall purpose of that commentary has been to establish a conceptual map reflecting the heterogeneity and conflicts of values which have shaped adult worker education. Using that map it will become easier to locate and give the co-ordinates of the Cape Town course.

The second major concern in the new evaluative strategies has been with the question of contexts and context variables. The difficulties in this area arise not only from methodological questions about the way to describe and define the meaning of contexts, but perhaps even more significantly, about which contexts constitute relevant concerns.

The quotation from Stenhouse given above shows one means of selecting relevant context variables. He speaks of the relation in evaluation

> "between a curriculum, the contextual variables in a school (emphasis added) and the teaching situation, psychological factors in pupils and teachers, and the effects obtained. It attempts to evaluate the relation between a curriculum (the content-methods bundle) as a (relatively) controlled variable and the uncontrolled variables in the individual settings (emphasis added) in which the curriculum is implemented."
>
> (Stenhouse, 1977 : 113)

/The problem.....

The problem Stenhouse faces is real. It is the welter of uncontrolled variables which threaten to overwhelm the evaluation. He makes his choice of relevance. It is limited by the school as an institution and attends to the pupils and teachers as individuals.
The wider range of variables in the cultural and social contexts are thereby effectively excluded. How important the choice of contexts may be, can be illustrated by reading an evaluative study which does not limit itself to the school and the pupils as individuals, and where the working class culture and social location are seen to have intense shaping force on the ways pupils live and learn in school. (cf. Willis, 1978).

The choice which Stenhouse makes is rational and defensible on the grounds of the stability and coherence of the larger variables within which he is conducting his evaluative study. The school is a formally established social institution with well documented and understood relations to the social and cultural milieu in which it is located (these are the assumptions). By contrast, the internal variables within the school and between pupil and pupil are less evident, established and stable.

The solution which Stenhouse (and many other evaluators) adopts is less available to a person working in non-formal education. Skager makes the point -

> "An evaluation theory and technology developed to serve traditional schools in a relatively homogenous social context can of course pretend for a time that there is nothing controversial about whatever criteria are being applied."
>
> (Skager R., 1978 : 24)

and Kinsey makes the reference to non formal education.

"A second....

> "A (second) problem is that existing evaluation strategies and methodologies are typically not very well adapted to the context of many non formal programmes. Often a given methodology presupposes conditions that do not exist in a non-formal setting."
>
> (Kinsey D.E., 1978 : 4)

and adds

> "often insufficient attention is given to anticipating and evaluating context variables."
>
> (Kinsey , 1978 : 9)

In fact one of the important influences in broadening the scope of evaluative theory away from a context-free, value-free, focus on goal assessment, was the experience of evaluators dealing with a very wide variety of educational projects.

The Open University reader quotes Glass as asking

> "whether a model of evaluation was needed that would determine the value (worth, benefits) of activities as diverse as a mobile learning laboratory for the children of migrant workers in Washington State, a computerized system of retrieving research information for teachers in Colorado and a legitimate theatre for underprivileged children in New Orleans."
>
> (Curriculum Evaluation 1976: 71)

Possibly the fullest theoretical grasp of the issues of context and values can be found in the pathfinding paper of Parlett M., and Hamilton D. Evaluation as Illumination : a new approach to to the study of innovatory programmes first published in 1972. In the paper they conceptualize the whole range of questions as part of"the learning milieu" and this becomes the focus of evaluative interest.

/"The learning.....

> "The learning milieu represents a network or nexus of cultural, social,institutional and psychological variables. These interact in complicated ways to produce in each class or course, an unique pattern of circumstances, pressures, customs, opinions and work styles which suffuse the teaching and learning that occur there.....
>
> Acknowledging the diversity and complexity of the learning milieux is an essential prerequisite for the serious study of educational programmes. The argument advanced here is that innovatory programmes, even for research purposes, cannot sensibly be separated from the learning milieux of which they become part. If an evaluation study hinges on the supposed perpetuation of the instructional system in more or less its original form, it makes an arbitrary and artificial distinction: it treats the innovation as a self-contained and independent system, which in practice it manifestly is not."
>
> Parlett M., and Hamilton D,1977 : 11/12

The importance of the formulation provided by Parlett and Hamilton's paper is that it provides the theoretical means of admitting the full range of variables and of simultaneously being able to grasp them in a single usable concept which links learning and the contexts - the learning milieu. What the paper does not do with the same success is provide the means of operationalizing the concept in an evaluation strategy.

Methodology remains the prime difficulty with the idea of evaluation as illumination. The authors themselves warn

> "Illuminative evaluation is not a standard methodological package but a general research strategy. It aims to be both adaptable and eclectic."
>
> (Parlett and Hamilton,1977 : 13)

They add some degree of specificity -

> "In illuminative evaluation there are three characteristic stages; investigators observe; inquire further; and then seek to explain....The transition from stage to stage, as the investigation unfolds, occurs as the problem areas become progressively clarified and redefined."
>
> (Parlett and Hamilton,1977 : 15)

/Such.....

Such a statement is admirably clear and simple but does not advance the understanding of the method by a great deal. Educational evaluation has become akin to social research but the suggestions offered fail to encounter the problems of social research as such. Thus, having escaped from the narrow confines of system theory by breaking into the wider field of social research, educational evaluation comes face to face with the problems of the social researcher, which it has not yet been able adequately to confront.

Parlett and Hamilton's description of "the learning milieu" provides an important theoretical starting point for an evaluation of the Cape Town course. As I have indicated, however, the Illuminative Evaluation Paper is not as helpful in considering questions of procedure and method. Several other writers more fully acquainted with the issues which are specific to non-formal education practice have commented on questions of evaluation method. Kinsey makes a general observation about possible starting points, warning against beginning within the paradigm of formal educational evaluation.

> "Typically there is a tendency to start with one's head in the world of formal evaluation principles, methods and standards, and then to put one's hand to adjust these so they will address applied program needs. In most non-formal programs, however, it is more promising to put oneself in the practitioner's shoes, taking his or her pragmatic needs seriously, and then to draw on principles and techniques that can help to produce an approach that is both feasible and productive."
>
> (Kinsey D.C., 1978 : 16)

As a starting point Kinsey's recommendation is important and connects closely with the idea of participation in the programme. Skager makes the point that evaluation may be one rôle available within the programme itself.

/"Part of.....

> "Part of the notion of participation is contained in the idea that the individual in question has a rôle in the situation that includes responsibilities other than evaluation. Participation also implies some sort of communality of concerns and activities between evaluators and other participants."
>
> (Skager, 1978 : 35)

The concept of participation is important for evaluation in non-formal settings for several reasons. Firstly it implies a powerful connection between the evaluator and the practitioner, with consequent effects on perspective and practically feasible results. Secondly, the notion of participant observer engaged in evaluation begins to deal with at least some aspects of the problems of evaluation as social research. The participant evaluator is able to draw upon a strongly founded tradition of social research in the form of participant observation - although in the educational programme context, the focus of the observations necessarily will be on the variety of learning experience present within the context.
As with participant observation studies in anthropological or sociological studies the great advantage is that the learning milieu in all its complexities is experienced from within.

In attempting to describe the knowledge and skills required of the participant evaluator in order to define the conditions and transactions of the learning milieu, Ruddock is admirably broad and eclectic.

> "It (evaluation) must be willing to embrace and draw upon the arts, sciences, history, economics, psychology as may be appropriate in seeking to elucidate the complexities of any educational process and investigation."
>
> (Ruddock, 1981 : 29)

Valuable though the breadth of emphasis is, in responding to complexity, it nevertheless seems important to register that vital equipment for the evaluator also includes an educated awareness

/of the....

of the background and immediate contexts of the learning group and topic area as well as a developed understanding of educational theory. After all, the concerns of the evaluation are an understanding of the educational significance of a learning situation involving particular groups of people.

At the same time as calling for an unusually broad intellectual base in the evaluator Ruddock makes plain his conviction that educational evaluation is also directly concerned with major theoretical issues,

> "As such (i.e. evaluation as a form of social research) all the great issues, the basic issues which divide sociologists - and social psychologists and other social scientists - and are the subject of debate at the highest levels of theory are of direct relevance to evaluation. Indeed they are unavoidable, because if they are not faced, then the critic will convict what one writes of naivety."
>
> (Ruddock, 1981 : 22)

Yet in methodological terms he affirms the need for stark simplicity as a necessary starting point.

> "When we know <u>what</u> happens and <u>how</u> it happens we will be in a position to ask <u>why</u> it happens."
>
> (Ruddock, 1981 : 40)

This is very close to Parlett and Hamilton's three stage method: investigators observe; inquire further; and then seek to explain.

Perhaps in concluding this discussion of theory and practice in evaluation the point can be made that the thrust of the new wave interpretations of evaluation has been to redefine in qualitative terms both the object of attention (vide the learning milieu) and the capacity of the evaluating mind (pace Ruddock). Ruddock's sharp comment on the record of evaluation during the 1970's

/"simplistic....

"Simplistic aims - sophisticated methods; these have characterised much evaluation in the past decade"

describes the negative condition. The alternative value sought by the new approaches derives itself from simple and direct approaches to complex issues. The crucial innovation advocated is the unusually rich, varied and sophisticated awareness suggested by both Ruddock, Parlett and Hamilton and others. To put it directly the motto might be

"Ask simple questions about complex issues - from an awareness of the relative importance of simplicity, directness and complexity."

The significance of this discussion of the theory and practice of educational evaluation for the study of the Cape Town course is twofold. Firstly it is confirmatory in that it validates the participant/practitioner enquiry into the nature of the project undertaken, and removes the artificial burden of goal-centred assessment of results. Secondly, it is enabling in that it suggests a simple direct mode of enquiry. In looking directly at the course the first question must be "What took place and how?". For reasons which will become plain it is neither desirable nor possible to separate the question "What happened?" from "How did it happen?". Content is process and vice versa. But those questions once answered leave the more important "Why?" questions to a later stage of explanation.

/6.2. The Foundations...

6.2. The Foundations of the Course

6.2.1. Introduction

This section of the discussion looks at the founding conditions and characteristics of the Cape Town course. It describes firstly the initial perceptions and judgements which led the Bakery Employees Union and the University towards an agreement to participate in a joint course. Second, it sets out the course structure and design and comments on its rationale and assumptions. Third, it examines the major formative processes shaping the learning group itself including comments on the limiting frameworks containing the debate. Finally, the section deals with the regulatory norms and practices which were established within the total group and argues the view that these gave the course a particular internal culture which shaped the form and content of the learning activity. In the succeeding section, the progress of the course will be recorded and discussed.

6.2.2. The Agreement

The course as a whole was constructed on the basis of an agreement. The agreement, however, contained some ambiguity. At an institutional level it was an agreement between the University of Cape Town and the Bakery Employees Union. At the same time, the agreement had a strong personal and individualistic character. Mr. Daniels, the General Secretary of the Union, acting in large measure in his personal capacity, reached agreement with Mr. Johann Maree of the Department of Sociology, U.C.T. Through each individual, their colleagues and their institutions became party to the agreement. I have indicated previously in the discussion of the original University proposal document something of the ambiguity on the University side. Events during the course were to make it equally plain that the General Secretary had created the course, in large measure on his own initiative.

/The agreement.....

The agreement was stated in the simplest form. The Union wished to bring newly elected shop stewards to a course of 8 two-hour evening classes to be given at the Centre for Extra Mural Studies on consecutive weekday evenings over 8 weeks. Mr. Maree would be responsible for the content of the programme. Costs were to be shared between the Union and the University equally.

It is typical of such agreements that they contain assumptions made by each side about the other which are not fully articulated in the discussions. At the time of the agreement the good faith of neither side was open to question.

The decision by academic members to agree to offer the course rested on a set of perceptions and assumptions which, though not without questions and doubts, came out positively. The questions and doubts surrounded two issues. The Union was not a part of the independent black union movement which it was our declared intention to serve and assist. Further, we had not intended to become involved in the training of shop stewards since we regarded that as part of the duty of, and best served by, the Union itself.

Against the negative features we posited an assumption about the Union. We knew that it had a long established history (from 1910), and that it had been a largely white craft union which had over time become predominantly "coloured" in its active membership. Against that background we noted two important recent policy changes. In 1973 it had disaffiliated from T.U.C.S.A., and it had successfully gained permission from the Minister to admit members of all races. As an unaffiliated, non-racial union we assumed that it was in the process of rejuvenating itself and of learning from the new form of union organization which had developed in

/the 1970's.....

the 1970's, and of encouraging African membership. We interpreted the wish to train shop stewards as a very important part of such a process since it suggested the view that the Union wished to develop a democratic internal organization, to be responsive to the immediate needs and demands of ordinary members on the shop floor and to build its strength on the solidarity of its members. We noted that the Union remained registered with the State and was a participant in the Industrial Council system, but we did not see that as a disqualification. Put briefly, our assumptions were that we could perform a useful rôle in helping the Union to achieve its own programme of change. Such assumptions interlocked neatly with our wish to build up experience in adult worker education and to engage with the situation in the labour movement.

From the Union perspective the perceptions and assumptions are less easily stated and described. It is possible to draw inferences from immediate comments made and from the later progress of the course, but these must necessarily be tentative and provisional. An important factor was that the Centre for Extra Mural Studies had offered a previous short course in trade unionism in 1977 and that Mr. Maree had played a major rôle in the course. The General Secretary had been a member of the 1977 course and had established a degree of personal rapport with the course leader. Both men were also known to each other through common Church association. These factors probably contributed to an assumption in Mr. Daniels that the proposed course would be acceptable to him.

Behind such immediate assumptions unquestionably lay a set of perceptions of 'the University'. From comments made throughout the course it can be inferred that at least the General Secretary

/and the....

and the majority of the Executive Committee assumed that they could expect academically sound, properly informed and dependable assistance in the task they had undertaken in electing shop stewards.

There may have been a number of other assumptions present and active among the members of the Union group, but they were either too personal or too hidden for them to play important rôles in the agreement.

Both sets of assumptions and perceptions as they have been described reveal a common characteristic - namely a simplification and idealization of the other party, and it could be surprising only to the participants that the experience of the course itself did not conform to the expectations aroused by the initial agreement.

6.2.3. The Course Structure and Design

The document which follows sets out the planned structure and design of the 8-week course. It was prepared by the academic staff between the date of the agreement and the beginning of the first course and handed over to the General Secretary for distribution to all participants. It was intended to achieve three objectives. The first was to indicate the range of subject content we considered appropriate for such a course. The second was to suggest a class procedure which would encourage participation and active engagement. The third was to leave open the possibility of adaptation to the programme.

"

PROPOSED SHOP STEWARDS' COURSE FOR
BAKERY EMPLOYEES' INDUSTRIAL UNION

Introduction

We propose that the course for shop stewards comprises eight seminars taking place weekly on Thursday evenings at the Centre for Extra Mural Studies of the University of Cape Town. It is important that the general secretary and members of the executive should also attend and fully participate in the course since shop stewards play a central rôle in a trade union and this could have important repercussions for the union as a whole.

/Venue.....

" Venue : Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, University of Cape Town

Date : 15 October to 3 December 1981

Time : 8.00 - 9.30 p.m. Tea and biscuits will be served after each seminar.

Course Outline

The topics suggested below are tentative and can easily be changed before or during the course. Two considerations were kept in mind while drawing them up: (1) the role of shop stewards, (2) the needs of the union.

Week 1 The Role of Shop Stewards in the Union

Open Discussion The existing role of shop stewards in the union, an evaluation of their role.

Lecture The role and tasks of shop stewards in a democratic trade union.

Tasks of shop stewards:

(1) Know your workers, their jobs, grievances and aspirations

(2) Represent and lead workers

(3) Negotiate with management on behalf of workers

(4) Participate in the union

Homework for Shop Steward Groups

What jobs do workers in your sections or departments do?

What do they produce and why?

What problems and grievances do they have?

Week 2 Representation and Leadership: Handling Grievances

Report of Groups Consideration of workers, their jobs and grievances.

Open Discussion What do shop stewards need to know to take up and try to solve workers' grievances?

Does the course need to be changed in the light of shop stewards' needs?

Training How to handle grievances at work.

How to represent workers.

How to be a good leader.

/Homework.....

" Homework — What are the employment conditions of workers in your section or department?

What do they earn?

How many hours do they work?

How much overtime do they work?

How many shifts do they go on?

Are women treated the same as men?

Are the employment conditions in conformity with the Industrial Conciliation Agreement?

Week 3 — Industrial Council Agreement and the Labour Relations Act (the former Industrial Conciliation Act)

Report of Groups — Consideration of employment conditions and the Industrial Council Agreement.

Open Discussion — Are the employment conditions of workers as laid down by the Industrial Council Agreement?

Is the Agreement adequate for workers in all respects?

How is the Industrial Council Agreement reached?

Do workers and shop stewards play an adequate role in negotiating the Agreement?

Lecture — The Labour Relations Act with particular reference to trade union registration and industrial council provisions.

Homework — What are factory working conditions like?

Is it very hot?

Is there enough light and ventilation?

Are safety measures to protect workers adequate?

Do workers get ill from working conditions?

Do the working conditions and safety precautions conform with the requirements of the Factories Act?

Week 4 — Occupational Health and Safety

Report of Groups — Consideration of working conditions and occupational health and safety of workers.

/Open Discussion....

"	Open Discussion	Are workers' health and safety adequately protected at work?
		Is the legislation adequate to protect workers?
		What can the union do to obtain adequate occupational health and safety?
		What role can shop stewards play?
	Lecture	The Factories Act and proposed new legislation : the Machinery and Occupational Safety Bill and the Conditions of Employment Bill.
	Homework	How do workers get dismissed at your factory?
		Have any workers been victimised for trade union activity in your section or department?

Week 5 Dismissal Procedures, Victimisation, Conciliation and Conflict

	Reports of Groups	Consideration of cases of dismissals and/or victimisation.
	Open Discussion	Have the dismissals been fair?
		Should the union have a dismissals procedure?
		What role should shop stewards play in cases of dismissal?
		How can shop stewards and the union prevent victimisation?
		When does the union rely on the law and when does it rely on its organisational strength?
		When do workers go on strike?
	Lecture	The legal provisions with respect to victimisation and strikes.
	Homework	Preparation for a simulation game which will train shop stewards in their role in a conflict situation as similar as possible to their actual work situation.

Week 6 Simulation Game for Training Shop Stewards

	Situation Game	Different members will play different roles: ordinary members, shop stewards, supervisors, foremen, management, union officials. At the end of the game, the role of the shop stewards will be evaluated: what they could have done, and so on. Everybody will get a chance to reflect on the role of shop stewards.

/Homework.....

" Homework — Evaluate the role of ordinary members and shop stewards in the life and activities of the union.

Do ordinary members participate enough in the union?

Do shop stewards participate sufficiently in the union?

Is the Shop Stewards Guide of the union's Executive Committee an adequate guide?

Where does it need to be changed?

Week 7 — Shop Stewards and the Union

Reports of Groups — Consideration of role of ordinary members and shop stewards in the union.

Open Discussion — Are ordinary members and shop stewards playing and active enough role in the union?

How can they play a more effective role?

Does the union constitution need revision to allow for shop stewards?

Does the Shop Stewards Guide need revision?

How can these suggestions be implemented?

Homework — Evaluation of the Shop Stewards Course by means of an open questionnaire. (To be handed out at the end of Week 6).

Where did the course fail?

What did you want to learn, but did not learn on the course?

What were the most valuable things you learned on the course?

Which methods taught you most?

What criticisms do you have of the course?

Week 8 — Evaluation of the Shop Stewards Course and Future Training

Open Discussion — Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the course.

Where did we fail and where did we succeed?

Is there a need for future courses?

What courses does the union need? "

JOHANN MAREE
TONY MORPHET

29 SEPTEMBER 1981.

6.2.4. The Rationale of the Curriculum and its Assumptions

a) The Core : content and process

The core of the curriculum design lies in its concentration on the variety of roles which the shop steward is called on to carry out. The design takes up two approaches to the task of learning about these roles. The first is that it sets out in the week-by-week definition of the classes the range of roles which needed to be acquired and adopted. The planned sequence began with a general preview of all the functions of the shop steward and, in subsequent classes, a particular role area was selected for closer consideration.

The areas were

(i) roles in relation to fellow workers

(ii) roles in relation to legal structures

(iii) roles in relation to management in connection with

(a) shop floor working conditions

(b) worker-management relationships

(iv) roles in relation to the union

This sequenced structure provided the curriculum with a definition of the content areas which the course would cover, and established the procedure of focussing on a particular role area within a given class.

The second approach to the learning issues was taken up in a definition of the process design of the classes. The document notes down several forms of procedure.

Reports of Groups
Open Discussion
Lecture
Homework
Simulation
Training

/The terms....

The terms are by and large self-explanatory though the connections between them and their underlying rationale require comment. The homework procedure is perhaps the most significant since it was intended to make it possible to build strong links between the immediate experience of the shop steward and the learning situation. In order to fulfil the homework requirement course members would have to carry out the actual duties and tasks of a shop steward and, in that way, would be encountering the problems and questions implicit within their new roles. Further, by bringing the results of their homework investigations into the class the members would be constituting the detailed content of the evening. In other words, the homework would create, in the class, the special and particular circumstances of the baking plants and baking industry. Homework was to be the link between the content areas and the substantive conditions which required discussion within those areas.

The function of the open discussion periods and topic questions was to bring forward and to collect for the benefit of all, the range of experiences which members of the group had accumulated during the week. Its other function was to encourage through comparison and comment a process of reflection on the questions at issue and the approaches adopted by individual members. A longer range function was to encourage the growth of mutual respect and to affirm the common unity and solidarity of the shop stewards as a group.

The purpose of the lecture was conceived strictly in relation to the homework and discussion function. It was intended to extend the process of reflection on experience by introducing comment at a higher level of abstraction which could be kept relevant, nevertheless, to group members by reference to key points in the discussion.

/The provision....

The provision for a simulation exercise was made in an attempt to bring the three elements of outside experience, action and reflection, into immediate activity within the course. In a sense it was designed as a test situation under the controlled circumstances of the learning group.

(b) Secondary Purposes

A secondary emphasis in the curriculum design falls on the union and its executive. In the introduction to the document it is noted that "it is important that the general secretary and members of the executive should also attend and fully participate in the course since shop stewards play a central role in a trade union and this could have important repercussions for the union as a whole."

There are also references in Week 1, Week 6 and Week 7 to the role of shop stewards in the union which implicitly call for disucssion from the executive members, but there is no direct provision for executive members to participate in their official capacity.

The rationale behind the invitiation to the executive to attend was for them to witness and to participate in, from their official positions, the training of the shop stewards. The purpose was for them to learn, by inference and as a secondary effect, how to alter or reconstruct the organizational patterns of the union to accommodate and promote the growth of a new centre of power in the organization. The assumption within the design clearly is that the executive has an important but minor role to play in the training programme.

The remaining secondary purpose in the design concerns the course itself and, through that, the interests of the academic tutors. The provision for evaluative assessment in the homework of Week 7, together with the return of a questionnaire in Week 8, was intended to open the way to a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the course as well as to the educational needs of the union.

/The academic....

The academic interests in the discussion are plain. From the comments we hoped to learn much about the progress of the particular course and to be able to generalize the results into improvements to any future courses, either for the same union or for others. The plan for evaluation was simple and direct both in the home-work questions and in the questionnaire and it was intended as a means of gaining immediate feedback on the internal performance of the course.

(c) The Assumptions

The assumptions which we as designers made in drawing up the curriculum for the course can be seen in the document and can be grouped for discussion under three headings:-

(i) Assumptions about the union and the executive
(ii) Assumptions about the shop stewards
(iii) Assumptions about the course and its training capacities.

(i) Assumptions about the union

Some of these assumptions have already been mentioned in the preceding section (The Agreement) but the rationale and structure of the course plan makes them both more evident and more detailed. Proceeding from the assumption that the union was keen to learn and benefit from the forms of organization which had been developing in the independent movement as a whole, we took two further steps. We carried forward the idea that it was the union as a body which wished to take the step of electing shop stewards and of setting up democratic organizational structures. Part of this unarticulated view was that the decision had arisen in the demand of ordinary members in low positions for a more active, responsive and militant organization. In relation to this bottom-up demand we assumed that the executive was broadly sympathetic and keen to further the process but were uncertain about their ability to do so.

/On the....

On the basis of these attitudes we structured the course to concentrate on the changing roles of the shop stewards; but at the same time to provide the means for the executive to comprehend the full scope of the changes in performance and structure they wished to promote on behalf of the membership to whom they were accountable.

(ii) Assumptions about the shop stewards

Building upon our unquestioned supposition that there was a new spirit and motive force among the rank and file members, we took the step of assuming that the shop stewards were individuals elected to the position because they commanded the respect and confidence of their fellow workers, and that they were, in some form, leaders of their immediate colleagues.

Moreover, we made the further drastic assumptions that they were people who had already reached the understanding and decision to accept the responsibility of being direct leaders. We assumed also that they had at least the psychological freedom, strength of purpose and will to act. We anticipated that they might find their circumstances inhibiting and dominating, but we assumed that in themselves they were ready and keen to act. As participants on a training course we saw them as people looking only for the necessary understanding, in order to be able to decide how to act.

It is not too extreme a comment to say that we assumed they were already fully fledged shop stewards in everything but their conceptual grasp of their task.

(iii) Assumptions about the course and its training capacities

There were significant ambiguities present in our assumptions about the course, its design, procedures and capacity. On the

/one hand....

one hand, as the design makes clear, we assumed that the course was in our hands to control and direct. The planned procedures for interaction between theoretical knowledge and the findings of experience indicate the control relationship clearly enough. We had the power of decision regarding content areas and class procedures - the learners' tasks were to function within our planned structure. In that sense the course "belonged" to us as the academic designers and teachers.

On the other hand, the course was assumed to belong to the learners and that our role was limited to that of interpreting and organizing what we understood as their intentions. The provision made for the alteration of the course, and for evaluation, makes this opposing assumption plain.

The contradictions implicit in the ambiguity of the assumption derive from unresolved issues concerning our precise role.

A further cluster of assumptions constituted attempts to come to terms within ourselves with the unresolved questions. We assumed for example that it was possible through the design and through the active commitment of the learners to bring the world of work experience into direct and meaningful relationship with the world of conceptual and theoretical understanding within the course itself. If that could be achieved, the control issue would be resolved. Tied in to this assumption was the view that effective training required both the engagement in new forms of experience (the homework) and in the clarification and understanding of the conceptual questions in that experience.

It is easily apparent that the various assumptions made, link together and support each other. If the root assumptions concerning the union, the mood of its membership, the situation of the executive and the character of the shop stewards had been

/reasonably....

reasonably accurate, the remainder of the assumptions about the course would have been justified. The design of the curriculum was not, on reflection, seriously flawed, but, to work effectively, it depended upon a sound base of other assumptions. It is perhaps significant that the root assumptions we made would have been appropriate only to the most well developed unions within the independent movement. Our tendency was to assume, in fact, that what we were trying to create was already in existence.

6.3. Formative Processes within the Learning Group

All learning groups create their own internal culture which guides and directs the ways they go about their manifold purposes. The study of these processes is associated with concepts of group dynamics. In the following discussion the attempt is made to extract from the Bakery course what appeared to be the major formative elements in the internal culture of the course. Basic frameworks of assumption are identified and normative procedures guiding the discussions are briefly described.

6.3.1. Limiting Frameworks

The origins of the basic dynamics of the learning milieu lay in the available experience of the participants. The two most obvious sources derived from the trade union personnel on the one hand and the academics on the other, though there were several individual variations within these.

The worker experience that pervaded the course expressed itself as a deeply felt sense of vulnerability. In nearly all discussions there was reference back to a sense of personal vulnerability. At one level it was expressed as actual physical vulnerability - as in the case of van drivers who described how they were the targets of gang-attacks because they were forced to carry money in dangerous areas. At another level it had

/psychological....

psychological dimensions - bakery workers were subject to verbal abuse from supervisors and line managers. More comprehensively, the participants spoke of the weakness of their positions since they felt dependent on the good opinion of management for their job security. Even Union employees, not themselves subject to working conditions in the plants, referred their actions back to motives of protecting the vulnerable positions of both the workers and the Union.

The causes of this source of vulnerability will be explored at a later point but the relevant point here is that the experience of being at the receiving end of hostile and ungoverned forces coalesced into a generalized taken-for-granted frame of reference for the worker participants on the course.

The basic frame-of-reference of the University staff by contrast, was rooted in the experience of security - particularly in relation to conditions of work, job tenure and salaries. The generalized psychological assumptions made within the framework affirmed notions of taking risks, extending commitments, planning and acting for the future.

The contrasting frameworks and assumptions provided two widely different sources of activity within the course. The conflicting dynamic between them established the basic structure of the exchanges in the classes and gave shape to the specific points of argument and debate.

The power of the assumptions about vulnerability produced among the majority of worker participants arguments in favour of stabilizing situations, avoiding problems, protecting individuals and acting in compliance with established patterns of power. Against these arguments the counter views articulated by the academic staff, and one shop steward in particular, were that

/people....

people should stand together, affirm each other and organize to overcome the weakness of their position and to change the balance of power in the plants. In broad outline it was this dynamic which created the foundations of the milieu.

Its boundaries were set in similar ways out of the contrasted root assumptions of the worker and academic groups. The boundaries were established because members understood that the course was to be a limited event. The eight-week plan made it clear that "learning" was to be separated from ordinary working activity and from the ordinary running activities of the Union. In the context of this understanding the internal boundaries to debate grew up at the points where the challenges present in the debates were resisted by members of the group on the grounds of their actual,working daily experience. The boundary points were seldom reached quickly, but once established it was not possible for either side to continue to insist on the validity of its interpretation or view, since it could be effectively denied on grounds of practicality or experience. The important point was that no means existed for conflicting views to be directly tested in the practical working situation. The only situation available to both groups simultaneously was within the classes;while it was possible there to debate the opposing viewpoints they could find no further means of realization and demonstration. Each side had behind them extensive "reserved" areas and by withdrawal into them could set limits to the force of the learning challenge.

In contrast to the strong definition which the internal sources and boundaries gave to the course, the formal structures were noticeably weak. Union people attended voluntarily and appeared to feel no anxiety at missing classes or arriving late. No pressure was placed upon them to make up work missed; nor did

/academic....

academic staff insist on the authority of their position as course designers or as the holders of knowledge. The reverse was often the case and deliberate efforts were made to weaken whatever formal boundaries were felt to exist. In the process the careful planning of the curriculum and the design of the course as reflected in the document cited above were to a large extent abandoned.

6.3.2. Normative Procedures

Ruddock (1980 : 48) draws a basic distinction in classroom teaching between "ritual" and "encounter".

> "obsessional people are given to ritual practices, and hysterical ones to dramas. Our classrooms often suggest rituals rather than dramas. A ritual expresses symbolically certain shared values. A class is felt to be a good thing. People come to class and feel better for it. The teacher has taught, students have listened; all have participated collectively; the sanctity of established usage has been confirmed. A danger is that rituals become sufficient in themselves.
> A drama occurs in a classroom when someone learns something he feels to be significant. There is a change, a development. His world has changed a little, and he tests it out. His teacher has given him something. They face each other in pleased excitement. It is a happening. The outcome cannot be predicted. The existentialists write of such meetings as 'encounters'. Between ritual and encounter there is a tension. Good teaching requires that we accept this tension, and that we work with an awareness of the endless flow of changing processes: as W.B.Yeats wrote 'like a long-legged fly upon the stream, his mind moves...'"

The dichotomy which Ruddock describes is interesting and helpful as a way of analysing and understanding the basic processes taking place in a classroom and forms a useful starting point for examining the development of the norms and group culture of the course. However, because of its non-formal character

/Ruddock's.....

Ruddock's terms cannot be directly employed. The "ritual" element on the course took on less of the character of "established usage" than would have been the case in a formal classroom. The group had to construct its own usages and norms and, in doing so, within the limits of the frameworks already described, established three discernably different modes of acting. They represent the different practical ways the group found of organizing the relations between individuals and sub-groupings.

As Stenhouse (1983 : 147) puts it

> "Small groups develop as part of their sub cultures principles of procedure which have the status of conventions or rules."

Interpreting the processes in three forms of procedure is an attempt to analyse the recurring regulatory patterns or conventions which shaped the activity of the course.

a) Procedure 1. The first procedure rested in the idea of collaborative study and joint participation. Initiated by the academic tutors, established as part of the foundation of the course, it was constantly stressed and reinforced in actual behaviour, that all had come to the course to learn; and that university people had as much, if not more, to learn as the trade union participants. Beneath the affirmation of the rule, or convention, was the asserted value of mutual respect for different forms of experience, knowledge and skill. The key significance of this procedure lay in its capacity to draw all members of the group together in the common enterprise. It established a convention through which the conflicts and difficulties present in the group's work could be handled, at least sufficiently effectively, to avoid total breakdown.

b) Procedure 2. The second procedure lay in the way individuals were able to make strategic use of the opportunities present

/in the.....

in the learning situation. In some cases the issues behind the strategy were individual and psychological, but in most they developed out of needs and demands related to people's understanding of their positions, at work, in the Union and in the society as a whole. From the first class it was apparent that collaborative work alone would not provide a fully effective convention for the group. There were too many hidden interests and agendas in action within the discussions. The second mode led directly to severe disruptions in the communication patterns within the group.

c) Procedure 3. The third procedure developed out of the realization that, present within the group, were a number of personal positions or commitments which people would not, or could not, open for discussion, debate and negotiation. These were held as reserved positions and they very often lay behind the strategic arguments of procedure 2. In most instances such reserved positions were the creation of lifelong commitments and judgements and, as a result, they were deeply entrenched as taken-for-granted assumptions about the world. Challenge to them was seen as challenge to the natural order of things and threatening to vulnerable individuals. Out of the reserved positions the potentials for conflict and breakdown grew within the group. The significance of the third procedure was that it provided the group with a means of limiting the debate and of evading the really deep and troubling challenges that arose.

6.3.3. The relations between the three procedures

The presence of the three procedures and of the relations between them are interesting because they demonstrate the consequence of establishing the course outside of the formal structures of either the University or the Union. Not only do they show the course as

/outside.....

outside the influence of formal styles of teaching and learning but suggest also something of the range of interests which were present and active in the course. There was never any clear line of division between one procedure and another, and the shifts occurred both as the class members came to know each other more fully and as the debates between people grew more critical and penetrating.

The course as a whole started, during the period of discussion and contracting, in Procedure 1. but by the second class it had become clear that the collaborative approach was crumbling and giving way to Procedure 2. By the fourth class there was open discussion between the academic team members whether the course should continue at all, indicating clearly the move into Procedure 3.

The three procedures gave shape and pattern to the overall progress of the course and provided the regulating norms within the individual classes, shaping"the endless flow of changing processes". Each procedure contained some of the elements of "ritual" and of "encounter" and the tensions between them, but they were more complex than Ruddock's description of "established usage" and "significant learning". The record of the course which follows will attempt to explore these in more detail.

/6.4. The Progress....

6.4. The Progress of the Course.

Introduction

The commentary in the following section sets down what took place during the shop steard training course. In order to organize the account, the events of the course, from the initial agreement to the concluding class, are divided into four phases. The phases represent the changing procedural patterns of the course and they correspond to the procedures discussed in the preceding section.

In each phase the description focuses first on the most evident and dominating exchanges - those which occupied the foreground of the class at work. In a second part of each phase attention is given to the suppressed, hidden or marginal events which were taking place at the same time. This division into foreground questions and background issues is important because it conveys something of the dynamic process present in the course as it veered away from its originally stated intentions.

6.4.1. Phase 1. From the agreement to the end of Week 2.

(a) The foreground:

The course began as a joint enterprise based on the mutual respect of all members for each others' experience and authority.

The general secretary initially proposed that the course be organized to accommodate 50 shop stewards, but after discussion agreed to limit the numbers to 25. He gave the assurance that the election process was under way and that he anticipated strong demand for the course from the newly elected stewards. He also asked that the executive be allowed to attend the course and to participate in the proceedings. From the academic side his requests were accepted and the course design (discussed in the preceding section) was prepared.

/The first.....

The first class, designed to give a preview of the scope of the course and to set out the basic terms of the discussion, also served to give shape and meaning to the collaborative procedure. The opening discussion on the existing role of the shop stewards in the union was formal and polite. The general secretary took the lead in explaining how the union had been considering over a number of years the question of electing shop stewards, and how the course was part of the fulfilment of a carefully considered, and long-held, hope.

In response, the course leader, speaking from within the ring of participants, spoke at length on the roles of shop stewards in a democratic union. In doing so, he drew for reference on the British trade union movement - particularly the resurgence of the shop steward movement during the 1960's, and on the development of the independent union movement in South Africa in the 1970's. The basic contrast which he established lay between a democratic union on the one hand and a benefit society on the other. In the contrast of aims, principles and organizational structures, he identified the shop stewards as the vital agents of the democratic union, since they were both ordinary workers and the elected representatives of their fellows serving in the union.

The presentation by the course leader was accepted by the course members without demur and the class proceeded to a more detailed definition of the tasks which the shop steward role involved. The emphasis in these descriptions fell upon the relations between the shop steward and his immediate fellow workers within his department of the plant. The steward was elected by them and remained, first and last, accountable to them. His tasks were to know them personally and closely; to be in a relationship with them where he would be the first to hear of their problems, grievances and experiences, both at work and outside. Further, it was the steward's responsibility to provide leadership for the

/group....

group which had elected him; leadership which would depend on knowledge, judgement and commitment to the value of solidarity. He would need to know how to evaluate particular issues and how to deal with the many forms of problems which would arise. As the workers' representative he would have the task of taking up and negotiating some issues with immediate management - others would have to go beyond him for negotiation between the union and management. But, at whatever level issues were taken up, he remained accountable to his co-workers for the negotiation process and its results.

Throughout the discussion the general secretary and executive members were strongly supportive of the course leader, endorsing the definitions which he was offering of the shop steward and his tasks. The elected shop stewards, however, remained generally passive, allowing the executive and the course leader to occupy the discussion all but exclusively.

In the concluding period of the class, the proposed homework was discussed and the point was clearly made that all stewards should complete the set tasks of finding out about the workers in their departments, their jobs and, in particular, their grievances.

The first class closed with tea and biscuits and a good deal of informal conversation, all of which had the character of affirmative and supportive comment on the class, as well as involving more personal enquiries between participants who had not known each other beforehand.

The second class opened with a report led by one of the shop stewards (Mr.J) on the homework assignment. His report dealt with the conditions of work and the grievances of the van drivers and salesmen, of whom he was one. At the centre of his account were the issues of driver safety and responsibility, particularly in

/relation....

relation to carrying large amounts of cash collected during the day's deliveries to outlet points throughout the city. Robbery and gang attacks were frequent and drivers found themselves in the position of having to defend themselves,and the collected cash, or of having to refund the company if they were robbed.

The allied grievance relating to driver responsibility for money collected,was that van assistants (who are low paid African staff) used bread loaves in a barter system in which they would exchange bread with other delivery vans for soft drinks, cigarettes or other consumable goods. The driver, however, was held responsible by the administration for any shortfall of cash, calculated against the total number of loaves taken in the morning loading.

Discussion of these issues was lively and at points intense, with strong expressions of concern and sympathy being expressed for the difficult position of the driver. Noteworthy,also, was the way in which both shop stewards and executive members tried to propose solutions to the problems raised. There was discussion of the possibility of equipping the vans with locked, armoured cash boxes, or of the company providing insurance policies for drivers.

In response to the proposed solutions the course leader intervened to re-establish the issue of driver safety as a problem and a legitimate grievance. From that point he began the exploration of the shop steward's roles as a leader and organizer, pointing out that it was not the task of the steward to find and propose solutions to problems, but to establish, in the plant, the processes through which workers were able to get management to find solutions acceptable to them. In making this analysis, he was implicitly affirming the definition of roles and tasks which he had given in the first class.

The general secretary entered the debate on the drivers' grievances by stating that he would take the issues up with management through

/the Industrial...

the Industrial Council and he expressed his gratitude to the shop stewards for bringing the issues to his notice in the class. He had made, he said, detailed notes of all that had been described.

Once more this was met with a firm, though polite and respectful rebuttal from the course tutors who made the point that there was not only one problem, but two, to solve. The first was the grievance itself; the second was the building of a stronger, more democratic union. The solution of the first, in fact, might damage the chances of finding the ways to improve the second. The shop stewards needed to be given the room and the opportunity to work with the grievances of their co-workers so that they could demonstrate their success in achieving improvements in working conditions. Too rapid an intervention by the union officials would rob the shop stewards of their opportunity for taking initiatives, building support and achieving results on small-scale, but important, initiatives. The whole argument was underpinned by a strong value assertion to the effect that the people on the shop floor possessed the knowledge, experience and capacity to take on the tasks and accomplish them effectively, but that they required the opportunities to take up, test, and develop roles.

The debate then widened in two other directions. The deputy chairman of the union (Mr.O) introduced an oblique, and implicitly critical, point by directly addressing the course tutors and questioning their approach, not only to the grievance question under discussion, but to the way the course was being organized. His statement initially set up the tutors in a position of authoritative knowledge ("You know about shop stewards") and then called for tutors to teach directly - "Tell us about them". His question, though formally respectful, was couched in terms of mild irritation and unease, and he seemed to be speaking in defence of his general secretary. The point made in this way was dealt

with by....

with by a reassertion of the basic norm of the first phase "No, we cannot teach you, we have all come to learn from each other about shop stewards", which, though it was an effective answer in one respect, did little to accommodate the unease developing among some members of the class.

The second direction taken by the debate reached expression through a young, outspoken shop steward (Mr R). Taking the point that the shop steward must be able to achieve results in dealing with grievances, he made a very strong assertion of the need for the steward to "go it alone". His case was intended to confirm the arguments put by the tutors against the executive, but he took the point very much further, producing in the process an implicit challenge to the executive and the general secretary. His argument was significant, both in the way it utilized a rhetoric of confrontation between workers and management, and for its generalizing of the grievances felt by African general workers in the baking industry.

The potential clash between Mr R. and the union executive was averted by the course leader recalling two important points made in the earlier discussion of tasks - that issues taken up by shop stewards should be particularized and framed in terms on which the case could be won, rather than pursued in terms of generalized confrontation; and that shop stewards could not "go it alone" because they acted only in terms of the mandate given them by their fellow workers.

At the conclusion of the session, the course leader drew the class together by referring to the union handbook on shop stewards and by showing his approval of the process of creating a shop steward organization in the union while simultaneously recognizing the difficulties raised by making such a change.

/(b) Background .....

(b) Background Questions and Issues in Phase 1

During the first phase there were a number of questions and issues which were not brought forward and addressed because they contradicted the basic procedural patterns resting upon notions of collaboration and mutual respect. Some of these prepared the way for the change of procedure in phase two.

The first issue concerns the number and composition of the class participants. Initially the general secretary had spoken of 50 shop stewards and had then agreed to limit the number to 25. On the first evening 13 people from the union registered for the course. This was substantially less than had been anticipated, but it was explained away by saying that the venue was difficult to find and that directions had not been good. At the second class the same 13 attended with no additional members who might or might not have been lost on the first night.

Furthermore, five out of thirteen were members of the union executive and, of the remaining eight, at least two members held positions which were quasi-managerial in that they were part of the plant administration.

One class participant presented in acute form the problem of the composition of the class. She (Miss M) was the personnel officer of the second largest baking company in the region. The general secretary had explicitly mentioned his wish that she should attend the course when the agreement was reached, and the grounds he had given was that he wished management to understand what the union was doing in regard to shop stewards and what the nature of their training was to be.

As course designers and tutors we had raised objections to her inclusion on the grounds that management had nothing to do with the development and training of shop stewards; that it was a union concern and, as a matter of policy, she should not come to the course. The general secretary, however, persisted in

/claiming....

claiming that it would be of direct benefit to the union, and the fledgling shop steward movement, if management could be "kept in the picture". Against our judgement we accepted his request and Miss M. became a member of the course.

The composition of the class therefore, in our view, was severely distorted. The total number of elected shop stewards was five, the same number as members of the executive (three of whom also had shop steward positions), and there were two union members who had quasi-management positions, plus the personnel officer of the Attwells Bakery. No African shop stewards were present. The course could not, in these circumstances, properly be termed a training course for shop stewards - though we continued to treat it as such.

The urgent questions raised by the class composition were pushed out of consideration during the first two classes by two factors. The first was the question whether people could not find the venue or could not arrange transport. The second was the normative pattern of procedure by which direct challenges and straight questioning of motives and purposes, at this stage, were excluded.

The second general question which was discounted by the procedure arose also out of the skewed composition of the class. It was apparent, in the second class in particular, that the executive and, especially, the general secretary, were the most powerful influence in union affairs. The manner in which the secretary took over responsibility for settling grievances was only the most obvious form of the influence. In all discussions shop stewards spoke with deferential reference to him, sometimes explicitly, but more often through gestures and tones. The one exception was Mr. R. whose talk carried overtones of criticism and challenge, though it was expressed in formal and polite terms.

/Relations....

Relations between the executive and other class members, though an incipient problem, were disregarded during phase 1 because it was assumed that executive understanding and support was necessary for the course to maintain its credibility with the union. As tutors we were anxious to guard against the possibility of undermining the leadership.

The strong confrontational rhetoric employed by one shop steward (Mr.R.) posed a third question which could not be effectively addressed within the normative rules of collaboration and mutual respect. He responded directly to the theoretical inputs given by the course leader and, by directly asserting the necessity for shop steward action, he began moving the course towards a situation of internal conflict. What was not possible was to evaluate fully and fairly the grounds and purposes of his view, because it was necessary to reconcile his views with those of the executive and other stewards. He was, therefore, listened to respectfully but drawn back into the normative framework by both the course leader and the general secretary.

At the conclusion of the second session, it had become clear to the majority of the participants that the course was changing its basic patterns and implicit rules. Procedure 1 was giving way,under the growing pressure of the unresolved problems, to Procedure 2. Two events made the shift abundantly clear.

At the end of the second class,during the tea conversation,Mr.R. engaged both course tutors in a lengthy and energetic conversation about the union movement in general. The conversation began with him praising the line taken by the course leader over shop stewards, his statements being punctuated with barely disguised contemptuous references to the executive. He followed by speaking in glowing terms of the work of the Food and Canning Workers Union and the independent movement as a whole, contrasting it

/with the....

with the feebleness of his own union. His motives in the conversation were both to proclaim his own interests and commitment and to attempt to affiliate the tutors to his position. This was something we felt we, as course leaders, were unable to agree to, and we maintained a degree of distance from him. We felt our position in the course would be jeopardised if we were identified with his perspective.

The second event was a decision which we reached between class 2 and class 3 to make a straight demand of the general secretary, asking where the elected shop stewards were, how many there were, how they were elected and why they were not attending the course. The decision reveals the sense of frustration and the feeling we had of being involved in something that we had not wished to do. It was not to be the lowest point reached during the whole course, but it showed that we felt our interests (and values) were being nullified by the circumstances. By the beginning of the third class, everyone had entered Procedure 2. The mode of collaboration and respect had been undermined and had crumbled in the face of the contesting interests in the group.

6.4.2.Phase 2. From Class 3 to the end of the fourth week.

(a) The Foreground:

In this period during the course, the norms described in Procedure 2 (see Foundations of the Course) became established as the pattern shaping the course. The chief characteristic of Procedure 2 was the way the course was used by the participants as an arena in which to pursue, through various strategies, their perceived self-interests.

The area of focus for the third class was the legal structure

/governing....

governing the union, working conditions in the industry and the relations between management and workers. Homework from the second class had been the study of the Industrial Council Agreement for the baking and confectionery industry of the Western Cape. Against the laid down provisions, the conditions of workers (in the steward's section) were to be checked in relation to wages, hours of work, overtime, shift work, and work conditions for women. Two shop stewards reported. Mr. O (the conservative deputy chairman of the union) and Mr. R. (the "radical" spokesman of the first two classes). Predictably, their accounts were very different.

Mr. O. laid continual and consistent stress on the fortunate circumstances of the workers. He spoke of the workers of his department but he left the impression that he was referring to the great majority of workers in the industry. In his statement he claimed that all workers were paid above the minimum levels laid down in the Industrial Council Agreement. Workers received bonuses. Workers looked forward to, and preferred to have, overtime opportunities. They received double pay for overtime hours. He referred also to supplements paid for transport, and of the favourable conditions set down for women workers in the I.C. agreement.

Behind the statements there was a considerable degree of pride, not only in the fact that the industry as a whole made good provision for its workers, but also that the union maintained "excellent relations" with an enlightened management and played an important part in securing the good terms and conditions. Underpinning both of these opinions was Mr. O's justifiable pride in the security and seniority of his position after 50 years with the same bakery. (These personal details were given to the class by Miss M., the personnel officer).

/Mr. R's.....

Mr R's report opened with a very different general description of conditions in the workplace. He spoke of the fact that the workers had no confidence in the management and that management similarly had no confidence in the capacity of workers. His statement was a direct rebuttal of Mr. O's description of mutual relations of trust and concern between workers and management. In detailed terms, Mr. R. examined the wages paid to the different grades of workers and showed how the wages would be spent by a 'coloured' worker and an African migrant worker. The core of his argument was that management used the lowest paid category of "general worker" as a means of keeping costs at a minimum. General workers were required to do a wide range of jobs which were in fact in skilled or semi-skilled categories, though they were paid only at the general worker rate laid down in the Industrial Council agreement (then R45 per week).

The drift of the case as it was presented was that workers at the lower end of the workforce, generally African, suffered under bad conditions while the skilled workers (generally coloured) were drawn into collusive relations with management, and that the union played an important role in organizing and stabilizing the management - skilled worker relationship. The trust spoken of by Mr O. was made to appear as something obtained at the expense of the low-paid unskilled African workers.

The contradictions implicit in the two reports presented the class with a considerable problem, since each was claiming to represent the real and full truth of the situation, and each was inviting agreement and support from class members. Three significant developments arose out of the contradiction.

/In the ...

In the first instance the general secretary entered the debate to affirm the deputy chairman's (Mr. O's) views. He stressed the good relations between management and the union and spoke of the way these were secured within the Industrial Council agreement. He carried this further, arguing that both the Industrial Council itself, and the history of good relations, were good for the industry as a whole, since it was through them that tangible benefits were secured for workers at all levels. More defensively he argued that the union had to try to avoid conflict with management because only a fraction of the total workforce in the industry was organized in the union, and that industrial conflict would leave the union and the workers in a highly vulnerable position. To this, as a form of reply to Mr. R. he added that the union was very proud of the stand it had taken on non-racialism, and it was keen to organize the African workers in the industry and enrol them in the union. Finally, he asserted with great fervour his vision of a united non-racial South Africa where management and labour worked in harmony for the benefit of all people.

The second important development to arise out of the contradiction, was presented by Mr.I, a prominent member of the executive, who was also a shop steward, as well as holding a post in the administration of one of the baking plants.

He addressed his remarks initially to the personnel officer (Miss M.) and, through her, to the rest of the class. His first statement was that he was pleased that management was present (in Miss M.) at the course, because it was important for them to see that the shop stewards, far from being a threat, were a distinct benefit to management. It seemed as though his remarks were made to offset the report and comments of Mr. R., although this was not explicitly said. To emphasize the point he made reference to a situation at a factory in

Worcester where African workers were being approached and recruited by the Food and Canning Workers Union and he questioned whether the leaders of the F.C.W.U. would not bring, through their militant policy, more harm than good to the workers. The point about the Food and Canning Workers Union was not clearly or fully articulated and was covered by a qualifying statement that the Bakery Employees Union was not opposed to any of the "new unions". In the context of Mr. I's argument, it did appear that the organizing work of the F.C.W.U. constituted a threat to management and that the development of shop stewards in the Bakery union was identified as a benefit for management because it would be able to counter the threat.

The third class closed with a sense of considerable strain present in the group. Two developments from the contradiction which arose out of the reports from Mr. O. and Mr. R. have been noted. The third development took place outside the class in a move made by the course tutors. The references made by Mr. I. to the work of the F.C.W.U. we felt to be a direct threat to our interests in engaging in worker education. Our original intentions, reflected in the first proposed document, were to assist the independent union movement, of which the F.C.W.U. was (and remains) a vital part. At the point reached in the course we felt that we might easily be doing the exact opposite and we decided to put the issue to the Secretary of the F.C.W.U., Mr Theron, for comment. Depending upon his reactions, we would decide whether to continue with or to abort the course.

We met with Mr Theron and discussed the issue as it had been raised in the course. His responses were clear and specific. The F.C.W.U. was organizing in the milling industry but had no intentions (at that point) of extending within the baking industry. The reasons given were mainly related to resources and strategy. Mr Theron encouraged us to continue with the course, expressing his approval of the general approach, though voicing his doubts

/about the ...

about the possibility of changing the practices of the Bakery union.

By the end of the third class at least three chief strategic movements were present and partially visible in the group. At one extreme Mr. R. was attempting to use the course as a means of challenging his union executive about the basic commitments and practices of the union. The executive (the general secretary, Mr. O and Mr. I) were endeavouring to counter the challenge by asserting to him and to other shop stewards the importance of harmonious relations and by pointing to the benefits to both workers and management of maintaining the levels of trust and confidence that had been built up.. The academic course tutors caught in the position of both participating in the debate and not overtly taking sides, were driven to reassess the basic purposes of the course. A fourth, latent and defensive, strategy of silent compliance was developed by the remaining shop steward members of the course. They refused to involve themselves in the conflicting arguments and maintained a careful detachment which implied a preparedness to go along with whatever view became authoritative. They seemed to see their purpose as "fitting in" with any given situation.

The fourth class which concentrated on health and safety issues in the industry, used the same process of shop stewards reporting on homework. It continued the strategic activity which had developed in class 3. However, there were also significant new factors introduced into the class. The chairman of the union, Mr. Norman Isaacs, appeared at the fourth class without prior warning or announcement. The role he adopted was complex and difficult to define. From one perspective he was there as an interested and sympathetic visitor keen to support whatever was taking place. In this role, he gave vocal support to the course leader, implicitly affirming the work being done on the course.

/From....

From another perspective he could be seen to be presenting himself as the person in authority, and to be enjoying the exercise of his rights as union chairman. His conversation and interjections were frequently in the form of jokes and diversions, emphasizing the freedom and capacity of his position. From a third point of view, it seemed that he had come to check up on the course and to assess the meeting. It was never clarified exactly why he had chosen to attend nor what it had been that had prompted the decision.

The Chairman's presence in the group had the effect of sharpening the contradictions between the three different purposes being pursued in the class. Mr. R. was compelled to articulate more clearly his questions about the role of the union and its relationship with low paid workers. The course leader brought out directly the tutors' problems with the course by insisting on knowing why the shop stewards were not coming to the course. The executive members advanced their position of protecting the good relations between management and workers by defining more clearly their sense of the bureaucratic role of shop stewards. Shop stewards were, in the executive view, there as " a communication link" between the union officials and the shop floor workers.

The increasing prominence of the encounters between conflicting views and interests made it abundantly clear that the original proclaimed educational purpose of the course was being undermined. By the end of the fourth class the course was less concerned with the training of shop stewards than it was with a debate about the policies of the union. This was most obviously evident in the compliant silence of the elected shop stewards and the powerful and vocal pressure from members of the executive. In reaction to this situation, as course tutors, we decided to deviate from the course plan and to replace the class planned for the fifth week (Dismissal Procedures, Victimisation, Conciliation

/and Conflict).....

and Conflict) by the class scheduled for the seventh week (Shop Stewards and the Union). The change was an attempt to bring forward into full prominence the issues which had been developing during class 3 and class 4. The importance of the change from the original plan lies in the fact that it gave formal recognition to the fact that as a shop stewards' training course the project was a failure, and that it would be more profitable to reconstitute the course, albeit informally and without agreement, as training for the executive. The change in the plan was communicated to class members at the end of class 4.

(b) Background Questions and Issues in Phase 2

Phase 2 (Classes 3 and 4) can reasonably be seen as a battle for the control of the class fought out between different interests. The strategies of the four contesting groups have been described as setting the dominant pattern of Phase 2. The marginal questions (those which have not been fully described because they fall outside the pattern) are difficult to define in this phase of the course because they tend to lie outside the events of the class altogether.

It was plain that during Phase 2 a good deal of course-related activity was taking place among class members, and others, outside the limits of the class. Only some features of this activity can be documented, but its general character can be given reasonably firm definition. In general terms it can be inferred, from what became visible in the classes, that members pursuing the various strategies in the classes, used the out-of-class time to consult with, and draw support from, groups and individuals whom they knew to be sympathetic to their position. The visit of the course tutors to the Secretary of the F.C.W.U. is only the best recorded instance of the process. It is paralleled by the evidence that emerged that Mr. R. had played recordings of the classes and discussed the events with members and workers of the F.C.W.U. with

/whom he....

whom he was friendly. Furthermore, the visit by the Chairman carried strong suggestions that he had been approached by members of the executive who were seeking his support and possible intervention. Of the four parties only the shop stewards seemed not to have engaged in some form of support gathering activity, underlining the increasingly passive position to which they had been moving since the start of the course.

One final external and unexpected "alliance" which developed during phase 2 of the course, was built up between the personnel officer (Miss M) and Mr. R. Somewhat to his embarrassment she, on two occasions, had spoken in support of his views in favour of an active, independent, shop steward organization in the union. At the end of each class, during the tea time conversations, she had pointedly engaged Mr. R in conversation, and made plans to visit him in the factory in which he worked "to help him sort out the problems and get results". In the formation of this alliance of support, Miss M. exercised her considerable personal charm.

Phase 2 of the course closed in a mood of dissatisfaction. None of the groups was able to feel that progress was being made. The executive would accept neither Mr.R's, nor the tutors', view of the situation of the union. Mr. R remained thoroughly unconvinced by the account given by the chairman, deputy chairman, and general secretary. The course tutors felt the project as a whole to be a failure since their goals and purposes were being frustrated and undermined. The shop stewards, in their more or less mute resignation, were pushed into a position at the extreme edge of the classes.

6.4.3. Phase 3. Classes Five and Six

The framework of selection and discussion for this phase of the course is established in the description of Procedure 3 which

/develops....

develops the idea of "reserved positions". The course, by the end of the fourth class, had come very close to the point of breaking up completely, since no one's purposes or interests were being served, and levels of dissatisfaction were high. Procedure 3 represents, not a retreat from the positions of tension, but a process of acceptance that the basic presupposi-tions of different people are radically different. The work done in Phase 3 became principally concerned with the clarifi-cation and presentation of the basic positions, judgements and interpretations held by the members. The move from Procedure 2 to Procedure 3 was made possible by the change in the plan of the course. By bringing forward the class on Shop Stewards and the Union, it became possible to deal directly with the issues which had been the sources of tension in the preceding classes.

Class 5 began with a homework report on Shop Stewards' tasks in the union submitted by Mr.M. It was a well prepared set of answers to the questions set in the plan. The interesting aspect of the answers provided in Mr.M's report is that they endeavoured to reconcile within a single perspective the conflicting views expressed by different people in the previous sessions.
A typical example is

> "1) The shop steward is the elected representative of the ordinary members of the union. He is their main means of communication/negotiation between the shop floor, management and the union in the case of disputes and grievances, likewise in the settlement of such disputes/grievances.
>
> 2) The ordinary member participates in the affairs of the union because the ordinary member votes to elect the Executive which in turn represents the voice of the ordinary member at committee meetings".

The fusion of alternative perceptions of the roles the union, shop stewards and ordinary members is indicated most obviously in the linking of "communication" and negotiation", but it is also

/present....

present in the double perspective of the ordinary members role (elects shop stewards and works with them on grievances, and elects the Executive so gaining a voice in committee meetings).

A further example is

> "6) The shop stewards' responsibility runs parallel with the Union in dealing with problems and advising members what the outcome is."

The report provides an interesting demonstration of the situation of the shop steward learners. They found themselves caught between the influence and views of the tutors on the one side and the executive on the other, and saw their task as reconciling the contradictions between them.

Class 5 began from Mr. M's report and in the discussion which followed engaged in clarifying and separating the views which he had linked together.

The "reserved positions" of class members can be most simply and best grasped by recording the different views expressed in relation to a conflict of interests in industry.

The general secretary, the personnel officer and the executive developed the view that there is no inherent conflict of interests between management and labour. Production is a common enterprise engaged in by different groups in different ways, but for the benefit of all. Harmony is the fundamental norm but it can be disrupted by failures of understanding and communication, and by prejudice and ill will. In this view, therefore, the role of the union is the maintenance of harmonious relations, the securing of benefits and the taking up of 'legitimate' worker grievances. Within the perspective the role of the shop stewards is mainly that of being a "communication link" between the ordinary worker on the shop floor and the union office. News of grievances is to be carried upwards and news of results and benefits,downwards.

/The effective....

The effective work of negotiating between management and workers is done by the union officials. The shop steward has an ancillary role in carrying out "preventive" work on the shop floor by dealing immediately with small, immediate disputes and difficulties. This work is designed to solve problems in the context of good relations with management.

The counter position, developed by the course leader and Mr. R in particular, was that a fundamental conflict of interests lies at the heart of industrial production. Management uses all means available to assert its right to control and direct production in order to generate profit for its own use. Workers battle to build their own power to control the terms and conditions under which they sell their labour and to exercise decisions about how profits from their labour will be used.

In this perspective the role of the union is decided by the ordinary worker. It is his or her means of organizing and building the necessary power to counter the organization and control of management. The role of the shop steward, therefore, is to build upon the initiatives of ordinary workers an organization which will act effectively, not only to secure improvements in the terms and conditions of service, but which will drive back"the frontier of control" as exercised by management. The union officials have a particular and limited role and area of action in the organization. The limitations are decided by the ordinary members, to whom officials are accountable. "The union" is primarily its members, not its officials.

Neither of these perspectives or positions was formulated in a single, comprehensive statement in the discussions of Phase 3, but by the end of the phase (class 6) all participants were clear that it was these two alternative views which constituted the debate. Moreover, the two perspectives on the roles of the union and the shop stewards had been subjected to a number of test

/situations....

situations. Some of these related to dismissal procedures and victimisation, but a more demanding test arose on the position of the African workers in the union.

On questions of dismissal procedure, the executive members made it plain that the union had reached agreement with management on dismissal procedure and that it was written into the Industrial Council agreement that any worker must receive three warnings in writing and that they must be signed by the worker in the presence of his shop steward. The executive spokesman added that the union was careful to investigate the circumstances of the dismissal "objectively" because it did not wish to find itself in the position of defending"unreliable" and "irresponsible" workers. In general members spoke of their confidence that the foremen of the plants would not dismiss a man unjustly - a view backed by the feeling that the foreman would "prefer" not to dismiss anyone.

The course leader raised the testing question by asking whether the procedure existed for a worker to have his case heard and to be represented by his shop steward.

The answer given was that the dismissal procedure was a recent innovation and that not all ordinary workers knew of its existence and, therefore, tended to accept the warnings and the final dismissal as inevitable. In the circumstances, they did not ask for their case to be heard. To cover the unsatisfactory nature of this answer, the general secretary explained that shop stewards would be carrying the information to all ordinary workers once their training was complete.

The general ignorance of workers about their rights raised the more immediate issues of the position of African workers in relation to the union. This question had been touched on several times in the previous classes (notably by Mr.R), but had never been fully discussed. In class 6 it was brought up directly under the general

/consideration.....

consideration of the low level of participation by African members. All union class members, excepting Mr. R, understood the problem as one of ignorance among the African workers. They spoke of the low levels of formal education, the problems of communication in the vernacular languages, the fact that migrant status left Africans feeling extremely vulnerable and unsure of themselves, and concluded that African workers felt themselves to be dependent members of the union. They paid their dues as a matter of form and habit, and had little understanding of the purposes or benefits of membership. The most obvious instance cited by the discussants was that no African members could be persuaded to accept nomination as a shop steward.

The course leader, speaking from the other perspective, made the counter point that the sources of the militancy of the independent movement were in fact among the African workers who had formed the foundation and driving force of the new unions despite (or because of) the conditions described by the executive. He raised the possibility that the low participation of Africans was the result of their perception that the union did not belong to them, and that there was no significant role for them to play in the organization. Two further points - that the executive did not take Africans seriously as workers (despite being sympathetic to their general plight) and that the benefits secured for skilled workers did not accrue equally to them, were added.

(b) Background questions and issues in Phase 3

The major focus of Phase 3 was on the clarification of the opposed positions held by members of class. I have suggested that they were contained by basic assumptions about the nature and purposes of production in industry.

The questions which lay outside the boundary set by the framework

/and which.....

and which could not be legitimately introduced in the discussion concern the ways these views were rooted in the different forms of experience of the members of the class. The two contesting perspectives were presented within the classes as self-explanatory and self-justifying views of the field of operation of the union; but the manner and style of the presentations, betrayed at every point the way the views had been formed by prior experience. I have discussed (in Foundations of the Course) the sense of vulnerability which permeated the conversation of the union members,and there seems little doubt that their understanding of the role and purpose of the union was founded upon that experience. In shaping their interpretation of the union they looked for the ways and means of ensuring the personal security of the worker, through maintaining the stability and security of the system in which he found himself. Translated into action terms this entailed accepting the power and control of management and working "co-operatively" to smooth out any problems that might occur, as well as supplying benefits to people in unavoidable trouble (e.g. assistance to widows or people unable to pay rent, etc.) The belief in harmony, amplified by commitments to liberal benevolence, constituted the ideological code of the perspective.

The costs of this interpretation and implementation of union policy were shown to be in the conditions suffered by the African workers.

The counter view of the union, as presented by the course tutors and Mr. R, was constructed upon two different foundations. The first (as mentioned in Foundations of the Course) was the experience of relative security from which the possibility of conflict could be considered without it being felt to be a direct threat. (In this Mr. R was in a different position to the tutors. He appeared to relish the idea of conflict). The second, and equally important source was the knowledge and interpretation of

the achievements.....

the achievements of the independent labour movement. It constituted a common point of reference and provided a model for the organization and implementation of effective union action. From that was derived the view that unions could work effectively from a position independent of management, provided they built their strength on the organization and unification of the ordinary workers through a shop steward structure.

The conclusion of phase 3 marked the end of the contest of views in class debate. In the final phase of the course, the questions were dealt with in two different ways - through a simulation exercise in class 7 and through the course feedback session in class 8.

6.4.4. Phase 4 The simulation exercise and evaluation

Both the simulation game and the evaluation feedback class established their own unique procedures and dynamics and, therefore, cannot be discussed under any of the three procedures used in Phases 1 to 3. Though very different from each other, they can reasonably be discussed as the final phase of the course.

(a) Simulation : Class 7

In the original course plan the simulation game was intended as a highly focussed experiential learning situation. We had hoped to design the game to place the shop stewards in positions in which they could test out, in a dramatic enactment, some of the key points of the training programme. Since the course had diverged considerably from our original design (become less of a training course for shop stewards and more of an education seminar for the executive) we decided to keep the simulation exercise, but to change its emphasis.

The roles were distributed in the following ways.

/TOP MANAGEMENT....

TOP MANAGEMENT	-	Course tutor
LINE MANAGER	-	Mr. R.
UNION EXECUTIVE	-	Course Leader Student Observer Personnel Officer Miss M.
SHOP STEWARDS	-	All shop stewards
AFRICAN WORKER	-	Student Observer
VAN DRIVERS	-	General Secretary and one other Executive member.

The roles were not scripted in any way and occupants were asked to formulate their own interpretations of the positions. It will be apparent that major roles were distributed among class members to reallocate their normal work roles. The main purposes were to place the union executive in the position of ordinary workers and to emphasise the shop steward roles.

Two critical incidents were selected to be played through. The first was an order from the line manager to a van driver to take out a van known to have faulty brakes. The second, a longer term issue, concerned the poor health of a driver suffering from kidney problems and piles as a result of driving badly designed and badly maintained trucks. The selection of these two issues indicated the limited range of worker interests which were represented on the course.

The sequence of the first incident to be played through began with the general secretary, in his role as van driver, refusing to drive the faulty vehicle and gaining immediate support and solidarity from his co-workers and the shop steward (Mr.A) All drivers refused to move until the issue was resolved. They took the issue to the line manager (Mr.R) who refused to accept the case and put considerable verbal pressure on them to get moving. Under the pressure they withdrew to consult the rules

/laid....

laid down in the Industrial Council agreement and then with a case prepared on the basis of the rules for handling grievances, they returned to the line manager who refused to listen or to see them. On the initiative of the shop steward (Mr.A) they requested an interview with higher management, lodging their complaints both about the vehicle and the treatment received from the line manager.

They were warmly and considerately received by higher management who listened sympathetically while pointing out the problems and difficulties of van maintenance and the need to keep the freshly baked bread moving. Management proposed that the shop stewards should first get the other drivers to go to work before the issue could be discussed.

The shop stewards and drivers resisted the proposal, referring again to the relevant rules. Deadlock was reached with neither side being prepared to move from their positions. The deadlock was not referred back to the other drivers and shop stewards who were left in ignorance of the management proposal. The shop steward and driver debated between themselves and in the discussion the shop steward produced a suggestion that a spare van be used to get over the immediate crisis. The driver (the general secretary) accepted the proposal and on that basis the other drivers were told they could begin their rounds, as the problem had been overcome. The drivers accepted, management was informed and the issue was "resolved to the satisfaction of all".

The game was then stopped and assessed by all the participants under the leadership of the course tutors. The key moment was identified as the point at which the shop steward and driver had decided that it was their responsibility to solve the problem alone. They had been split off from the opinions, support and decisions of their fellow drivers and the other

/shop.....

shop stewards, and had looked for ways to help management out of its difficulty. The impracticality of the "solution" (i.e. finding a spare truck) was not commented on, but there was much reference to the way in which higher management had set the climate in which the worker representatives wanted to help, not the man with the grievance, but management, who were responsible for creating the problem in the first place.

The second sequence dealing with the more difficult and longer term issue of a driver's deteriorating health was played through by the same people occupying the same roles. In the early phases the activity followed closely the pattern of the first game.

The affected driver (the general secretary) sought the support of his immediate shop steward who took the issue to the shop steward committee. They attempted to formulate a case, with particular proposals, requesting a fairly comprehensive package of concessions and improvements

(a) better vehicles
(b) more effective maintenance
(c) shorter hours for drivers
(d) better sick leave and benefits
(e) life insurance policies for drivers
(f) an immediate change of job for the affected driver.

The requests were presented to the line manager as the first step towards a negotiation process. They were met with sharp hostility. He denounced the groups of shop stewards as troublemakers and as manufacturing issues to disrupt normal working routines. In response the shop stewards demanded to see top management and moved en bloc to give effect to their demand. They explicitly refused to send a single representative, having seen the dangers of the management tactic of splitting off the representative from his body of support.

/Management....

Management refused to negotiate with the stewards, and moved instead toward the union officials, informing them that the demands of the shop stewards were threatening the long standing good relations between them. In the management - union discussions a deal was arranged whereby the cheapest demands were met (life insurance policies) and the simplest response was made to the vehicle problems. Drivers would be given cushions and kidney belts. In return, the union was asked to make every effort to bring the African workforce into the normal working pattern of good relations between management and the union. The union officials promptly made contact with the African group, offering membership and benefits.

When the shop steward group returned to reassert the demand for negotiations with management, they were asked whether they had been in contact with the union and were referred to the union office to consult with the officials. They returned with the officials. Management then succeeded in splitting the officials and the shop stewards, returning the latter to their work and promising to negotiate the issues with the officials,which was promptly done in terms of the deal already agreed to.

The union officials, therefore, were placed in the position of endorsing the lowest possible response from management and of persuading the shop stewards and drivers that it was in everyones' best interests that they be accepted. At that point the game was concluded.

The second sequence was played through at a higher level of intensity and drama than the first. In particular, as the conclusion of the game became clearer, and the implication, that the union officials were being manipulated by management into a position where they sold out the interests of shop stewards and workers was grasped by the participants, the levels of hostility and aggression became pronounced. It

/became.....

became difficult to organize and control a study of the implications of the game for the participants. However, the crux of the game sequence was plain to all in the fact that, because the union placed great store in the preservation of good relations with management, it was extremely vulnerable to manipulative deals, and could be used by management to exercise effective control of the workforce in return for the disbursement of minimal benefits.

In the discussion of the game, the criticism of the general secretary's and executive's approach to union organization, already implicit in the sequence, was made direct and explicit. The secretary reacted to the demonstration of vulnerability with a very strongly expressed and obviously intensely felt defence. He gave a long, impassioned account of the benefits given by the union to the widow of a worker left in poverty at the death of her husband. He accused the course leader of making a mockery of the efforts of the union to gain the rightful claims of the poor and the voiceless. In the speech he was no longer discussing the game, but asserting his own life commitments and values and attacking what he saw as grossly insulting behaviour. The course leader responded with reassurances that his intentions had not been to mock and deride the commitments or the hard work of the union officials, but to indicate some of the problems of the approach which they had to workplace issues. Beneath the reassurances, however, there was also a strong counter statement of commitment from the course leader - benefits should be gained by men in their work, in the way they worked, and what they worked for, and should not be available only after they were dead.

The simulation exercise as a whole exposed with unusual and direct clarity the issues which had been debated in the first five classes. The tests of the shop stewards' understanding

/of their.....

of their roles were effective, but the revelation of the flaws in the union officials' interpretation of their task was sharper and more penetrating.

(b) Evaluation : Class 8

The eighth class, set aside for a discussion of the evaluation questionnaire and of the course in general, was anti-climatic.

The written answers to the formal questionnaire, while generally positive, provided very little dependable judgement of the course. They appeared to be formal responses to formal questions, and to be positive because the respondents were answering people with whom they had been working over eight sessions. The personal relations of the group exercised more influence than the desire to be critical and objective. This should not be seen as remarkable or unusual, since it is a common form of response to evaluation questionnaires administered within a "learning system". The learners wish to maintain their good relations with the teachers and, therefore, they answer that the teachers have taught effectively and that they have learnt much.

This problem was in part overcome by using the questionnaire as a basis for a discussion of the course as a whole in which critical comments could be presented by members in the process of a review of the eight classes.

The first question, "How did you first learn about the "possibility of the course?" raised two important questions in discussion. The first was the presence of the Personnel Officer (Miss M) who said that she had been invited by the general secretary - the first time this had been made plain in the classes. Both she and the secretary went on to say that they felt it had been valuable that she had attended and that she would be able to support the move to create a shop steward organization.

The second question concerned the programme of elections for shop stewards. It emerged in the discussions that 7 major plants had not yet held elections for all shop steward positions.

Some....

Some had not begun at all and others had held elections in only a few departments. In only one major bakery was the process complete. In addition, the election procedures came up for comment with critical observations of management involvement and support being made by Mr. R.

In answer to the first question the evaluation focus fell not on the course but on the union.

In the commentary on expectations (Questions 2 and 3) there were three areas which individuals regarded as not fully covered.

(a) the legal structures (Factories Act, Unemployment Insurance, Labour Relations Act etc.)

(b) the low participation rate of shop stewards

(c) the insufficiency of the discussion of concrete and specific problems

These comments reveal the deflection of the course away from its training function and its preoccupation with the values and commitments of the union itself.

Much of the discussion around what participants felt they had learned from the course (Questions 5 - 11) reflected a blend of the views put forward by the course tutors in favour of an active and democratically accountable shop steward organization shaping the union, and those of the executive in favour of the shop stewards as a "communication link" between the union and the shopfloor.

In judging the contribution of the course tutors, the participants expressed a majority opinion that they had been "biassed against management" and that their knowledge had been "theoretical rather than practical".

Responding to directed assessments of the whole course, there was strong support for the view that there should be further

/courses.....

courses for the shop stewards, and participants said they were ready to recommend the course to other shop stewards and other unions.

The overall weakness of the evaluation session, despite some of the discussion, lay in the fact that union members wished to think well of themselves and be well thought of by the tutors. Their criticisms were muted and restrained and fell within a context of exhortations and promises to do better. The divisions, tensions and encounters recorded in the earlier classes were suppressed and reconciled in a spirit of friendliness and comradeship.

The course closed with the usual tea and conversation characterised by expressions of great good will and respect for each other. What had plainly not been a successful course was, in the process, reconstituted as an important achievement for all. Among the many larger questions, it was this contradiction which made further study of the course necessary.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ANALYSIS OF THE COURSE

CHAPTER 7

THE ANALYSIS OF THE COURSE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the evidence of the course and to explain the significance of the events. In one sense the focus of the analysis falls on one major fact : that of the very wide gap between the intentions and purposes expressed in the original proposal paper and the final outcomes of the 8 week course. The disjunction between intentions and outcomes will be explored through four more specific and limited focuses:-

(i) The significance of the perceived common purposes which led to agreement between the university tutors and the Bakery Employees union and to the establishment of the course.

(ii) The significance of the evidence of a progressive transformation of the educational curriculum. This is most obviously visible in the shifts from Phase 1 to Phases 2 and 3 in the duration of the course.

(iii) The meanings of the low levels of satisfaction among the participants with the educational outcomes.

(iv) The significance of the wide range of unintended outcomes of the course.

These four focuses are taken up as the starting points from which to begin the evaluation of the course. The evaluation is more concerned with understanding and explaining the meanings of "success" and "failure" than it is with attaching those values to particular aspects

/of the....

of the course. The analysis has a basic assumption that "failure" is at least as meaningful as a "success".

In the discussion use will be made of the three contextualising frameworks discussed in Chapter 1 in order to examine the ways in which, what appear as educational issues, have their origins in circumstances and conditions which may be better understood in social and historical terms. The discussion will also draw on the history of worker education as it is given in Chapter 4.

7.1. The Perceived Common Purposes and the Establishment of the Course

In the commentary on the project proposal and its rationale (Chapter 5) the point was made that in the context of worker education practice it represented a hybrid form, mixing radical content and liberal forms. It was the differing responses to the hybrid character which led both to the rejection of the proposal by the unions of the independent movement and to its acceptance by the general secretary of the Bakery Employees union. To put the point more sharply, it was the liberal educational milieu implied in the proposal which caused one grouping to reject,and the other to accept, the offer. The specific features which emphasised the liberal character of the proposal were:-

(i) the offer of a planned course of study,
(ii) the provision of knowledge by "independent" university intellectuals,
(iii) the location of the course outside of normal union activity and in a university context.

For the leadership groups of the independent movement these features were likely to compound the problems of the lack of knowledge among ordinary rank and file members. Knowledge would be perceived by them as coming from outside the experience of workers and union

/members....

members, and to be the possession of specialist intellectuals who were remote from them in every way.

It was the same set of features which drew the attention and support of the Bakery Employees union. This is readily established by the fact that it was on their initiative that a complete redirection and reconstruction of the content took place. What they perceived was the offer of an acceptable educational structure - a programme of classes to be given by acceptable individuals in an acceptable milieu. On that basis the content and purpose was re-negotiated.

Two further questions of importance arise out of the fact of the agreement reached on the basis of provision. The first is why the Bakery Union found the offer attractive. The second is why the university proposal, while pursuing a radical goal, had to be presented within a liberal form. Neither of these questions can be given appropriate answers in educational terms and they will be addressed later in the analysis within socio-historical terms. Their impact upon the educational transactions, however, was powerful.

7.2. The Progressive Transformation of the Curriculum

The evidence of the transformation of the course curriculum is pervasive. The first major transformation was the production of a design for the training of shop stewards and the abandonment of the original purpose. The significant movement lay in the change from one kind of purpose and curriculum to another. The original purpose had been directed towards widening and deepening the intellectual understanding of rank and file union members; the changed purpose was directed towards the development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes of shop stewards working in a very specific industrial and trade union context. It would not be too extreme to say that the purpose changed from education to training.

However, while the content and purpose of the course were significantly altered, the procedures and roles of the participant group remained to a large extent what they had been in the original design. The learners were assumed to be in possession of valid

/experience.....

experience and to be strongly motivated towards gaining conceptual clarity of their tasks. The assumptions made about the tutors were that they were in possession of adequate and appropriate conceptual knowledge which would equip them for their role as clarifiers and thus trainers. In terms of its procedures the curriculum laid stress on the participation of all members and on the validity of different forms of experience and interpretation.

The change in the curriculum design introduced an important contradiction between a limited and closely defined training goal, and an open expressive and developmental educational procedure - a procedure appropriate to widening and deepening understanding but less adequate for the preparation of individuals to take on specific tasks in the Bakery Employees Union.

At the opening of the course the contradiction was masked by the assumptions shared by both tutors and group members that a consensus existed concerning the nature of the shop stewards' role in the Bakery union.

The second major force acting to transform the official curriculum was the discovery, which became clear in the change from Phase 1 ro Phase 2 of the course, that there was, in fact, a second unplanned and unofficial curriculum operating in the classes. The important owners of the second curriculum were the general secretary and members of the executive. Their curriculum, which they had brought into the course in a set of unformulated assumptions, was brought to life and activity by the effects of the first two classes. By the third class (Phase 2) it was apparent that they disputed the "appropriateness" of the conceptual knowledge of the tutors and they proposed their own concepts as a competitive framework. The sources of the competitive framework were seen to be, initially,in patterns of habitual union practice where the experience of many years of working in executive positions had provided a particular theory-in-action.The second curriculum was implicitly understood as an

/induction....

induction of the stewards into a link position carrying communications up and down the union structure.

It was the competitive encounter between the two curricula which produced the significant distortions and transformations in the progress of the course. These were most notable in the re-ordering of the focus of the course away from the shop stewards, who became bemused or troubled spectators, and towards the executive who became protagonists in a series of encounters.

At this point, the analysis of the course in terms of curriculum theory begins to lose explanatory power because it is unable to address the next order of questions which arise, namely: "Why was it that the course tutors selected and maintained the particular curriculum they used?", and "Why was it that the executive inserted into the course their particular curriculum with the ensuing consequences?". To answer both questions a more sociological framework of interpretation is required. This will be discussed at a later point.

7.3. The Educational Outcomes of the Course

Under this heading I will examine both the wide range of unintended outcomes and the low levels of satisfaction felt by the members of the course with the educational outcomes. As with the two preceding questions the initial analysis is developed in educational terms, using, in particular, an examination of the learning milieu and an analysis of teacher/learner roles.

The essential feature of the learning milieu was its non-formal character. Constituted at the extreme margins of both the university and the trade union it was established as an educational "space" which was not subject to the direct constraints, disciplines or standards of either institution. One consequence was the freedom of the group to establish its own rules and procedures. A second was

/that the....

that the procedures were not anchored in external structural demands and, therefore, were vulnerable to shifting internal balances of power and interest. It was principally this characteristic in the milieu which made the emergence of a competitive curriculum possible. I shall argue in a later section that no other milieu was possible for the programme as it was planned, but, for the present, attention needs to be given to the roles available to the tutors and the participants within the particular milieu. Because there was little or no externally derived structuring of the classes, the conventional boundaries to the expectations and performances of learners and teachers were blurred and uncertain. The tutors made concerted efforts to establish their equality as learners with the participant members and cast themselves in non-directive "facilitative" roles. Their tasks were understood to be those of stimulating and guiding discussion, of providing conceptual knowledge where and when appropriate, and of encouraging the group to enquire and discover the significances of their tasks. Adopting this form of the teaching role necessitated the taking up of formal impartiality and of maintaining a deliberate openness to all expressed points of view. Such a definition of the teacher role was entirely consistent with the definition of the learning milieu and (for the same reasons) was the only legitimate available role in the circumstances.

The central problem generated by the role definition was that it was contradicted by the tutors' assumptions about the curriculum. The curriculum as planned contained within it a closed and not an open set of goals. The shop stewards were to be taken towards a particular and relatively "closed" interpretation of the roles and tasks of a shop steward in a democratic union, but the teachers' role would be only to "facilitate" their discovery of the knowledge and understanding. In other words, the implication was that the relevant

/conceptual....

conceptual knowledge was already lodged and present within their experience. It required only to be "discovered", clarified and articulated for it to become active and effective.

In the progress of the course what happened was that the executive members, the general secretary in particular, moved into the blurred and uncertain limits of the teacher role, and began to introduce a different conceptual interpretation of the stewards' experience.

Because part of the definition of the teacher role included the necessity for impartiality and facilitative openness, there was no ground on which to oppose and control the executive entry. Nor was there any warrant for supporting or contradicting any line being taken by any members of the class.

The uncertainty and blurring of the teachers' roles had a corresponding effect upon the definition of the learner role. They were disappointed initially in their expectation of an authoritative declaration of objectives and practices of shop stewards' work. They found themselves having to participate in debates in which their own experiences were subjected to analysis and commentary, but without gaining, as a result, a clear understanding of their tasks. The consequences of the competitive struggle between the two curricula were the undermining of the learners' role, leaving the stewards in the confused situation of spectators excluded from the main action of the event.

The learning outcomes of the course provided satisfaction for no one. From all points of view the unintended consequences and effects predominated over the hoped for or expected outcomes. The educational explanations for this pronounced reversal of expectations have been offered, but in themselves they penetrate only the relatively shallow surfaces of the course. The failures of learning revealed are, in part, the product of inadequate educational theory, but they are more powerfully the result of the social and historical factors

/shaping....

shaping the educational moment

7.4. Explanations in a Sociological Framework

Three questions have been posed as a result of the educationally framed discussion given above. Part of the answers to these can be sought in the wider sociological frame of reference.
The questions are

(i) Why did the university proposal cast its radical goals within a liberal educational framework, and why did the Bakery Employees Union find such a proposal attractive enough to constitute the basis for a course?

(ii) What factors lay beneath the creation of the curriculum maintained by the course tutors and what caused the executive to introduce the second competitive curriculum?

(iii) What factors operating in the circumstances decided the choice of a non-formal educational milieu in which the teacher/learner roles were modified and recast?

The beginnings of the answers to these questions can best be grasped by looking at the course from the position of any newly elected shop steward participant. His experience of the eight classes would have been one of initial confusion, followed by a sense of being the focal point of competing definitions of his tasks and duties. Both the course tutors and his union executive officers were proposing particular perspectives through which he could understand his position, and were declaring action agendas for him to follow. In the course both tutors and executive members occupied positions superior to his own - one in terms of knowledge, the other in terms of position and experience. Each group sought to sponsor the learning which the steward ought to obtain. Even when relegated to a spectator position in Phase 3, the shop stewards remained the object of the contested debate. The social process at work within the boundaries of the course beneath and within the educational definitions, can be described

/as recruitment.....

as recruitment. Closely allied with the recruitment process is that of affiliation. It is worth recalling that recruitment appears constantly in the history of worker education as a vital part of the educational work.

In the Cape Town context the concepts of affiliation and recruitment need to be widely extended to incorporate a description of the multiple cross-cutting processes taking place simultaneously.

From one direction the processes begin within the university. For a variety of biographical and, as we shall see, historical reasons, individuals within the university sought to weaken their affiliation to what was felt to be, pejoratively, a liberal institution fulfilling the social demands of the ruling order, and to strengthen their affiliation with the radical and militant organization of labour. The means at their disposal and the property they had to bargain with was the provision of knowledge through education. To accomplish their purpose of contributing knowledge to the labour movement they were obliged to recruit not only participants to their project, but learners to "appropriate" understandings of their roles.

Both of these latter aspects of the recruiting process are plainly evident in the course. The agreement between the tutors and the general secretary to provide the course marked the first stage of securing participants in the planned programme. The second stage of drawing the learners into the appropriate grasp of the knowledge and attitudes required in their role is visible in both the curriculum design and the record of discussion. The final element in the university-sourced recruitment process is projected beyond the course. Through becoming effective democratically accountable shop stewards, the perspectives and commitments of the ordinary shop floor workers will be changed. They will become affiliated within a unified movement committed to building the power of the labour movement. All of these tasks, however, are to be prosecuted without abandoning the university as an operational base. It is

/central....

central to the rationale of the whole project that the university, and individuals within it, have particular resources to offer to the labour movement. To abandon the base is to cancel those particular resources.

In the historical record there has been considerable evidence of universities, and university based intellectuals, attempting to develop similar roles, though these have never been unproblematic, and there are many instances of resistance to the recruitment process being expressed by participants.

In the Cape Town case, one of the significant aspects lies in a counter process of recruitment operating in and through the course. The process begins within the management structures of the baking industry. It is stimulated into activity by the work of the Food and Canning Workers Union. The first step in the process is for management to perceive the potential threat posed to relations in the industry by the entry of the F.C.W.U. From that through a climate of encouragement the Bakery Employees Union is recruited, in part through the Industrial Council as the appropriate agency, to develop a system of controls over the general workers (largely African). Management exploits the long standing affiliation relations between itself and the union to initiate the process of recruiting shop stewards to act as a moderating structure.

It is while the union is busy with this task that the general secretary perceives the utility of the proposed course and successfully recruits the course tutors to provide the appropriate training for the newly elected stewards.

The evidence upon which this interpretation of the counter process is based is all within the course record. The significant features are the presence of the personnel officer, the references from two sources to the work of the F.C.W.U., the reference to management support for the idea of shop stewards, the proclaimed benefits to management of the shop steward organization, the roles proposed by

/the executives....

the executives for stewards and the powerful engagement by the executive in the proceedings of the course.

The considerations which return the discussion to the unanswered educational questions are why the point of intersection for these multiple processes of recruitment should have been educationally defined, and why it should have taken on the particular educational form it did.

The most obvious response to the considerations is that educational work provided the means through which each group was able to pursue their goals. This simple response, however, masks a deeper and more general point. Educational work provides the necessary means because it operates as a code for social processes. The terms, conditions and rules of educational exchanges provide the detailed means of negotiating and regulating broader social processes. The Cape Town case indicates the operation of a particular code with considerable clarity for two reasons. Because the course was designed in non-formal terms the presence of the social purposes of the actors was more than usually evident; and since the official curriculum was subjected to challenge, these purposes were brought into further prominence. At significant points the educational framework creating the code in terms of teaching and learning was ruptured by the pressure of the social purposes.

Changing the angle of perception only slightly, it is possible to see in the progress of the course the manner in which the idea of "education" is constituted as a defined category within which particular social transactions can take place - in this instance the recruitment of individuals and the allocation of responsibilities and tasks.

The code created by the curriculum in the non-formal learning milieu of the Cape Town course was especially flexible and inclusive because of the diffuseness of the social transaction taking place within it.

/The course....

The course tutors were engaged in recruiting the stewards for the radical labour movement - without themselves being fully part of it. They were themselves in no position to assign tasks and responsibilities and, therefore, pursued a method which would allow the stewards to discover them for themselves. The same flexibility and inclusiveness drew the executive members into the alternative recruitment transaction. The diffusion and blurring of the teacher and learner roles derives from the same source.

7.5. Explanations in a Historical Framework

The Cape Town course is a small scale event with limited and circumscribed consequences. The attempt to understand its meanings within a historical perspective is not directed towards evaluating its significance as an episode of influence or impact. The explanations seek instead to show how the particular experiences contained within the classes carry within them historically created conditions.

The educational and sociological explanations offered earlier in this chapter leave unanswered the broad social structural pressures which shaped the course. At the educational level the explanations focus on the internal theories and actions of the participants. At the sociological level the concentration is on the social processes taking place through the classes. In the historically based explanation we are seeking answers to a set of questions concerning the roots of the same social processes.

The beginnings of an answer to the question lie in conceptualizing the course as a point at which the purposes of two different groups of people intersect. The groups have different purposes, and different points of origin and location in the social milieu, but for a period of two months both identified the common point of intersection, defined as an "educational project", as serving their interest. An effective explanation requires that both the common and the divergent interests of the two groups be defined.

7.5.1. The Common....

7.5.1. The Common Interests

The interests held in common by the university and the trade union groups, which brought the course into being and held it together, however precariously, for eight weeks, lay in related ideological understandings and social class positions.

The common ideological foundation which allowed the two groups to find each other is liberalism. Each group had its own interpretation of the ideology, and its own relation to the main body of assumptions contained in the ideology but in each there was sufficient involvement with liberal ideology to allow the formation of a common purpose. The single most apparent piece of evidence of the common foundation was the shared perception of the utility of education.

For both groups educational activity - in particular the deliberate integration of conceptual knowledge with lived experience - was the vital means of effecting changes in social action. The autonomy and determining power of consciousness and ideas implicit in the idea of education lies close to the centre of a liberal ideology.

The involvement of the university group with liberal ideology gained much of its character from the institutional context. Universities in general (and the University of Cape Town in particular) are principal social bearers of liberal ideological assumptions, particularly in relation to ideas of knowledge. By retaining their direct links with the institution, within the course, the university tutors were, at least implicitly, affirming those assumptions.

From the trade union group the more directly social assumptions of liberal ideology were consistently affirmed.

/Several....

Several major interventions made in the course by the general secretary emphasized his personal commitment to the values of social harmony. The union was identified as working for harmony between classes and races and the foundations of its activity were defined as maintaining good personal relations based on honesty and trust. Structural issues such as the relations between management and workers were defined in terms of personal relations, communication and understanding.

The overlap in ideological assumptions between the two groups provided one important aspect of the common interests linking them together in the project. The second lay in the degree of similarity in the class position of each group. Both shared a common petty bourgeois location. The university intellectuals and the trade union bureaucrats were, in different ways, both situated in the area where the interests of the working class and the bourgeoisie proper meet and overlap. Because neither group was exclusively rooted in either of the contending classes, the common project became possible. The contradictions exposed within the course, between form and content, and between the conservative purpose of the union seeking "good relations" with management and the radical purpose of the tutors seeking affiliations with the organized working class, showed clearly the double perspective of the petty bourgeois position.

The common interests of the participants were barely sufficient, however, to maintain the course against the pressure of the divergent purposes of each.

7.5.2. The Divergent Purposes

The dynamics of the course as given in earlier commentary above derived themselves from the contest between two groups seeking to move in different social directions. The general

/directions....

directions of each have already been commented upon, as has the point at which they met. What requires attention in this section is the manner in which the differing purposive directions arose out of the socio-historical context. The historical record of adult worker education gives multiple examples of the tensions inherent in the work and the focus of earlier discussions has been on the ways in which these tensions have arisen out of wider social forces. The attempt here is to utilize the insights gained from the history and to apply them to the specific case.

A vital point of connection between the course and the broad socio-historical context can be seen in the references made within the classes to the Food and Canning Workers Union. The F.C.W.U. was a major actor in the course without ever entering the educational arena. Much of its impact lay in its symbolic importance for many of the individuals on the course, including the tutors, and also for the other major external actor, the management of the baking industry. In an important sense the course took place because of the ripple effects produced by the organizing of African workers in the F.C.W.U.

The union entered the course to solve a problem. The immediate features of the problem were the incorporation of shop floor workers within the given structures and practices of the union. The gap between officials and ordinary workers had become a problem (rather than the normal condition) because both management and the union had perceived it as a point of weakness through which African workers in the industry could be recruited into a militant independent union. The independent movement had, through its successful work during the middle and late 1970's, particularly since the Wiehahn Report changed the given meanings of labour relations. The F.C.W.U.

/was taken.....

was taken as a symbol of the changed terms. For the course tutors and one of the shop stewards, the symbol had strong positive connotations. For the union officials it carried equally strong negative connotations.

Through the symbolic authority of management on the one side and the independent union movement on the other, two powerful *external* actors entered the course. They were carried into the educational processes of the course through the force which they exercised in the minds of the participants, shaping not only many of the detailed exchanges between people, but the very existence of the course itself. In this way, beneath the surface interactions of the participants, the historically produced conflict between capital and labour exercised its influences on the proceedings.

Without the sharpening conflict between organized capital and organizing labour in the late 1970's, neither the existence of the course nor its particular form of educational failure would have been present. The final origins of all that took place in the period between August and December lie in the impact of the intensification of a struggle between classes which is also a politically constituted conflict between dispossessed black people and their white rulers. The growing presence of the conflict impacted in different ways on the liberal petty bourgeois habits and assumptions of both the university intellectuals and the trade union officials, urging them both towards some form of response - which issued, typically, in an educational project.

The resurgence of the will to organize and act among African working people, made plain initially in the Natal strikes of 1973, established a powerful critique of white liberal universities. The implicit challenge issued, focussed on the

/relevance....

relevance of intellectual work to the struggles of ordinary people to attain not only a reasonable standard of living, but some capacity in the processes of reaching decisions about how their lives were to be lived. The range of responses among white intellectuals has already been commented upon, but it requires to be restated that the Cape Town course, and its more effective Johannesburg counterpart, arose out of the intention among a limited intellectual group to put the liberal (and petty bourgeois) intellectual inheritance at the service of the independent movement. The direction of the intellectual liberals was therefore away from the traditional linkage between the white ruling class and the liberal intellectuals. The intention was to disrupt the traditional pattern and construct a new linkage with the trade union movement.

The impact of the same events during the 1970's, upon the petty bourgeois officials of the established Bakery Employees Union was almost exactly the reverse. In the rising power of the African working class they identified more than merely a critique of their positions. For many, in particular those classified "coloured" and holding some of the benefits of collusive relations with the ruling class (e.g. formal education) the independent labour movement presented an immediate threat. At risk were not only the union organization and the positions of officials, but also the job security of "coloured" members and, in the final analysis, the always precarious position of "coloured" people as a whole. Facing a crisis reminiscent of the situation confronting the white working class in the 1920's, they sought refuge in the liberal ideology of "good relations" and education.

/In seeking....

> In seeking education they had turned instinctively towards the university, assuming its own liberal commitments as the basic given factor, only to find that,within the liberal construct of a course, the intentions of the tutors were pointed directly towards the perceived threat. This fact, once grasped and understood, transformed the course from a training programme for shop stewards into a contest over the proper conduct of a trade union in 1981.

7.6. Conclusion

The analysis and explanation of the course can be sought in terms of educational curricula, social process or historical action, and each can be made to yield some important aspect of the total meaning. Finally, however, the taxing demand upon the interpreter as researcher is that the significance of all three levels of meaning be integrated in comprehensive judgement. Such judgement will be attempted in the conclusion to the dissertation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

The opening paragraph of R.H. Tawney's essay titled An Experiment in Democratic Education, first published in 1914, expresses in brief and eloquent form the fundamental conclusion reached through the preceding descriptions and discussions of worker education.

> "It is surely a very barren kind of pedantry which would treat education as though it were a closed compartment within which principles are developed and experiments tried undisturbed by the changing current of the world around. The truth is that educational problems cannot be considered in isolation from the aspirations of great bodies of men and women for whose sake alone it is that educational problems are worth considering at all."
>
> (Tawney,1964 : 74)

The relationship between the 'closed compartment'of the Cape Town course, with its own internal 'principles' and 'experiments', and the 'changing currents of the world around' has formed the chief object of attention and the inferences to be drawn and judgements to be made derive from that.

Stenhouse refers to the relation between history and judgements about educational action.

> "It (history) helps to define the conditions of action by summarizing experience in such a way as to suggest the considerations we shall have to take into account as we make judgements on how to act. We must attempt to understand the complex web of social variables which contextualize our actions and influence our outcomes."
>
> (Stenhouse, 1981 : 105)

/It is....

It is this relation which forms the basis of the concluding remarks.

The specific judgements towards which the study has worked were given initially in the four aims. They were

(i) to provide as full an understanding as possible of the nature and meaning of the events which took place between the origins of the educational project and the conclusion of the eight week course.

(ii) to make reasoned theoretical and practical judgements about the course itself and the project of university involvement in adult worker education

(iii) to make a contribution to the theory of curriculum design and evaluation in non-formal education

(iv) to make a contribution to the sociological understanding of educational practice.

8.1. THE FIRST AIM

The first aim was directly addressed in Chapter 6 of the study, although all that went before and after the direct presentation of the progress of the course must be seen as contributing to the account.

There are inevitable limitations in the achievement of the first aim. These lie in the fact that another observer, drawn from a different position in the course, would provide a different account of the educational and social processes taking place. The inherent potentials for distortion were subjected to a number of critical checks and controls all of which are visible in the presentation of the argument. The expectation at the conclusion is that any participant or observer would accept the legitimacy of the account given.

The interpretation of meanings contained within the course

/derives....

derives to a considerable extent from the attention given to the history of worker education in the British and South African contexts. The attainment of the aim in this aspect rests upon the fullness of the interpretation. Limitations in the scope and density of the historical reading were inevitable though the expectation is that such historical material as is given will illuminate and justify the interpretations given.

8.2. THE SECOND AIM

The second aim involved the judgement of the project in theoretical and practical terms. The conclusions reached are, in my view, particularly clear.

At a theoretical level it is plain that there are major problems associated with the involvement of universities and university-based staff with projects in adult worker education. The issues can be seen with some precision from a number of different vantage points.

The recruitment, training and membership development of trade unions takes place most effectively when carried out within the trade union organization itself. Educators with radical goals need to draw their curricula and their practice from the direct lived experiences of the union organization in which they themselves participate.

Radical intellectuals and groups have entered and remained active within union organizations because they have sought to affiliate themselves directly with specific social processes in a historically formed social context. These social processes, in particular the recruitment and training of people into tasks and responsibilities, and the affirmation of unity and solidarity have formed the content which has been encoded in the informal training activities of organizers. Crucial to the trainer role has been his/her own position and participation in the process and the organizational context.

/The situation....

The situation of an education programme for trade union members outside of the organizational structure ruptures, and reconstitutes, the social processes present in the curriculum. The arguments of Chapter 7 have shown how the reconstitution of the processes of recruitment took place in the Cape Town course, but the points may be generalized through reference to the historical record. The University Extension movement and the W.E.A. in Britain, and the Night School movement in South Africa have each wrestled with the problem and no amount of personal understanding and commitment to radical goals has been able to overcome the difficulty. Once the educational work is designed, and delivered outside of the organizational structure, the significant relations between knowledge and experience, between teacher and learner, and between petty bourgeois intellectual and working class labourer, shift sharply.

In practical and theoretical terms the judgements of the Cape Town project are that the independent unions who rejected the original proposal were acting on a sound understanding of their needs and circumstances. Further, in view of the experience of the course, it would not be sound to attempt further projects of a similar kind.

A larger question remains facing the university - the same question originally asked, albeit with different resonances, in 1917 and repeated on many occasions since. "Does the university have a role or responsibility for adult worker education?". The progress of the argument dealing with the social variables surrounding the question of university involvement in adult worker education has demonstrated that this question requires an answer which takes the liberal intellectual traditions of the university as its starting point.

/Ironically....

Ironically the Cape Town course experience contains within it a valuable implicit answer to the question posed. If the course had been constituted from the outset as a joint seminar between the union officials and the university tutors on the training of shop stewards it would have come near to meeting the responsibility and fulfilling an appropriate university role. Under such circumstances the curriculum could have been designed as an exploration of options available to the officials. Mezirow puts the problem and possible solution clearly

> "Helping adults construe experience in a way in which they may more clearly understand the reasons for their problems and understand the options open to them so that they may assume responsibility for decision making is the essence of education. Bringing psycho-cultural assumptions into critical consciousness to help a person understand how he or she has come into possession of conceptual categories, rules, tactics and criteria for judging implicit in habits of perception, thought and behavior involves perhaps the most significant kind of learning. It increases a crucial sense of agency over ourselves and our lives. To help a learner become aware of alternative meaning perspectives relevant to his situation, to become acquainted with them, to become open to them and to make use of them to more clearly understand does not prescribe the correct action to be taken. The meaning perspective does not tell the learner what to do; it presents a set of rules, tactics and criteria for judging. The decision to assume a new meaning perspective clearly implies action, but the behavior that results will depend upon situational factors, the knowledge and skills for taking effective action and personality variables discussed earlier.
> Education becomes indoctrination only when the educator tries to influence a specific action as an extension of his will, or perhaps when he blindly helps a learner blindly follow the dictates of an unexamined set of cultural assumptions about who he is and the nature of his relationships. To show someone a new set of rules, tactics and criteria for judging which clarify the situation in which he or she must act is significantly different from trying to engineer learner consent to take the actions favored by the educator within the new perspective. This does not suggest that the educator is value free. His selection of alternative meaning perspectives will reflect his own cultural values, including his professional ideology - for adult educators one which commits us to the concept of learner self-directedness as both the means and the end of education."
>
> (Mezirow, 1981 : 22)

The value of these observations lies in the recognition given to the fact that it is the learners who must act, and who need to reach decisions about appropriate action. The social process encoded within such a curriculum is closer to consultation or conference between people representing different basic interests though possessing a degree of common purpose. From the university position the critical and emancipatory capacities of education are affirmed; from the union position the organizational commitments and interests are not compromised.

In project terms such a conception of the educational role of the university would entail a withdrawal from any form of direct teaching and the development of a consultative capacity, to be made available for any worker organizations considering educational work. Such a role would be within the terms defined in the second clause of the Hughes report to the Centre for Extra Mural Studies March 1981.

> "(b) a facilitative programme assisting unions and industrial training centres."

The 'facilitative role' would not be without its own problems though it would avoid the intractable difficulties experienced in the project.

A second possible role which could develop out of the initial consultative service might be a training programme for industrial tutors though this would depend upon careful and detailed negotiations between unions and university staff. The Hughes report identified this role in clause (d).

> "(d) a programme developing resources and curriculum materials leading to industrial tutor training"

8.3. THE THIRD AIM

The third aim encompassed broader educational questions relating

to curriculum.....

to curriculum design and evaluation in non-formal education. These issues have received considerable attention in the body of the discussion and they reach a point of conclusion in the concept of the curriculum as a code. The substance of the concept is that curriculum design is the procedure through which social material (in the form of interests, goals and assumptions) is transformed into educational principles and procedures. The operative curricula of any educational practice, whether they are the officially stated terms of procedure or the unofficial private procedures of individual students or even the total "hidden" curriculum, transliterate the processes at work in the social milieu into educational terms.

The curriculum-as-code in formal education is given strong definition and authorized status. The formal bodies and institutions surrounding the educational practice serve to select, define, control, sanction and defend the formally stated curriculum. In doing so they enforce a strong boundary between what is defined as *educational* and what is defined as *social*. Education is made to seem a relatively autonomous field of action. In short it becomes constituted as an independent *system* with its own history, vocabulary and terms of action.

Non-formal education by contrast has no separated, semi-autonomous,existence as a system. It arises directly out of perceived social needs and their possible satisfaction. It is the creation of specific small groups of learners and teachers pursuing a perceived common purpose for a limited period of time in order to achieve limited social goals. The boundary in non-formal educational initiatives, between educational and social purposes is relatively weak. The relations between the specialized practices of educational work and the social conditions

/which.....

to curriculum design and evaluation in non-formal education. These issues have received considerable attention in the body of the discussion and they reach a point of conclusion in the concept of the curriculum as a code. The substance of the concept is that curriculum design is the procedure through which social material (in the form of interests, goals and assumptions) is transformed into educational principles and procedures. The operative curricula of any educational practice, whether they are the officially stated terms of procedure or the unofficial private procedures of individual students or even the total "hidden" curriculum, transliterate the processes at work in the social milieu into educational terms.

The curriculum-as-code in formal education is given strong definition and authorized status. The formal bodies and institutions surrounding the educational practice serve to select, define, control, sanction and defend the formally stated curriculum. In doing so they enforce a strong boundary between what is defined as *educational* and what is defined as *social*. Education is made to seem a relatively autonomous field of action. In short it becomes constituted as an independent *system* with its own history, vocabulary and terms of action.

Non-formal education by contrast has no separated, semi-autonomous,existence as a system. It arises directly out of perceived social needs and their possible satisfaction. It is the creation of specific small groups of learners and teachers pursuing a perceived common purpose for a limited period of time in order to achieve limited social goals. The boundary in non-formal educational initiatives, between educational and social purposes is relatively weak. The relations between the specialized practices of educational work and the social conditions

/which.....

which generate the project are immediate and direct. The absence of a mediating *system* of educational institutions enforcing a strong boundary has two major consequences.

The first is generally evident in the flexibility, inclusiveness, and consequent diffusion, of the curriculum design. In non-formal projects there is usually little that can be considered authorized knowledge. The primary aim is not the transmission of certified information but the inclusion of learners in a participative process. The flexibility is the necessary condition for the inclusion of a multiplicity of potentially contradictory perspectives rooted in social experience.

The second becomes clear in the process of reviewing the Cape Town course. Because the curriculum code proposed by the course leaders is diffuse and flexible, and because of its immediate relation to social experience, it is vulnerable to reinterpretation and alternative practice. (In the Cape Town case the union officials read into the code an alternative set of social meanings concerning the union and the shop stewards).

The implications of these two consequences for the non-formal curriculum planner are of considerable importance. He must have a full grasp of the social material encoded within his own design, and he requires, as well, an understanding of the social significance which the learner participants will read into the educational events. Such understandings will tax the designer, even those gifted with the most comprehensive, subtle and concrete sociological imagination. The implications for the evaluation of non-formal education are no less onerous. The evaluator requires a capacity to scrutinise educational events from a number of different vantage points. He must be able to inhabit the differing frameworks of perception of the

/actors.....

actors as well as being able to grasp and measure the significance of the social dynamics operating through the educational code. The attempt to evaluate "learning" leads inevitably into the differing meanings and values which the concept carries in the social milieu of the course.

8.4. THE FOURTH AIM

The fourth aim of the study was to contribute to the sociological understanding of education. The significance of the aim should by this point be fully apparent since it has been consistently argued that it is the social interests of the educational actors which shape the conditions of the educational interaction. Reference has been made more than once in the study to the importance of the sociological imagination. It has special significance for the planner of educational events, but it has no less importance for the social theorist seeking to understand the roles and effects of educational practice in social life.

In adult worker education the sociological significance of the theory and practice lies in the fact that under consideration is a crucial point of social contradiction. The social interests of capital, and the capital controlling class, stand over against the interests of the working class. In the historical account it has been argued that two basic traditions of educational work developed out of the tensions of the contradiction. One tradition stressed the harmony of interests between the opposing groups and proposed that enlightenment lay in the recognition of a deeper layer of common interest beneath the facts of contradiction. The other tradition claimed that enlightenment lay in a full and frank recognition of the meaning of the contradiction-that the interests of different classes were irreconcilable - and

/that only....

that only action taken to transform the social conditions would constitute a legitimate educated response.

The fact that both traditions employed non-formal educational means indicates that there were (and are) no formal educational means of managing the contradiction. In formal education the contradiction is suppressed or deflected.

Because the concentration of attention falls upon non-formal practice at a point of major social contradiction, it is not in any way surprising that the record of educational work is filled with accounts of affiliations, cleavages and conflicts. Many, if not all, are the consequence of the fragile connections between coded ideas in the form of educational curricula and social purposes deeply embedded in the conditions of class conflict.

The specific contribution which the study makes to the sociological understanding of education relates directly to the general point which Ruddock makes

> "We are not to consider social factors as 'influences' that enter into adult learning, as it were, from the society outside; they constitute situations"
> (emphasis original)
>
> (Ruddock, 1980 : 31)

The study has pursued, as a major theme, the concrete meanings of the word "constitute". The importance of historical pressures in shaping particular interpretations of immediate social perceptions and needs has formed the groundwork of the argument: the manner in which the social interpretations have been constructed into educational projects has provided the detailed discussion of the theme.

Sociological interest in education has been characterised by a disabling division between macro perspectives in which direct correspondences have been traced between broad socio-historical developments and classroom practice; and micro perspectives in which the sociology of the classroom or school has been the

/limiting....

limiting framework. The present study has endeavoured by means of a case study in context to overcome the limitations of both perspectives

8.5. CONCLUSIONS CONCLUDED

At the centre of adult education as theory and practice are two potentials. One is directed towards the social adjustment and regulation of learners; the other is predicated upon their emancipation as individuals and as groups. Neither potential is easily fulfilled.

The study as it is presented, is the result of a critical effort to comprehend the meaning of the emancipatory potential at the point where the education of adults faces its most severe challenge; at the point where the social base underpinning all educational work, experiences its sharpest contradictions in the conditions of industrial society. Adult education has a contribution to make to the emancipation of working people. The question is how it is to be done.

REFERENCES

1. BOOKS

Barrow, Robin (1976) — Common Sense and the Curriculum Allen and Unwin London

Berger, Peter (1963) — Invitation to Sociology. Penguin Harmondsworth (edition used 1972)

Berger, Peter and Luckman, Thomas (1967) — The Social Construction of Reality Penguin Harmondsworth (edition used 1972)

Berger, Peter (1972) — Sociology: A Biographical Approach Penguin Harmondsworth (edition used 1976)

Callinicos, Luli (1980) — Gold and Workers. A People's History of South Africa vol.1 Ravan Johannesburg

Carr, E.H. (1964) — What is History? Penguin Harmondsworth

Coombs, P.H. (1968) — The World Education Crisis. Oxford New York

Coombs, P.H. (1973) — New Paths to Learning for Rural Children and Youth. International Council for Educational Development

Craik, W.W. (1964) — Central Labour College. Lawrence and Wishart London

Denoon, Donald (1972) — Southern Africa since 1800. Longmans London

Guy, Jeff (1979) — The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom. edition used Ravan Johannesburg 1982

Hamilton, David (1976) — Curriculum Evaluation. Open Books London

Hargreaves, David (1967) — Social Relations in a Secondary School. Routledge and Kegan Paul London

Harrison, J.F.C. (1963) — Learning and Living : A Study in the History of Adult Education Movement 1790-1960. Routledge and Kegan Paul London

Hobsbawm, E.J. (1968) — Industry and Empire. The Pelican Economic History of Great Britain . vol.3. From 1750 to the Present Day. Penguin Harmondsworth

Jennings, Bernard (1976) — Albert Mansbridge and English Adult Education. University of Hull

Jepson, N. A. (1973) — The Beginnings of University Adult Education. Michael Joseph London

Kelly, Thomas (1963) — A History of Adult Education in Great Britain from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century. Liverpool University Press

Kinsey, D. E. (1978) — Evaluation in Non-Formal Education. Centre for International Education University of Massachusetts Amherst

Kuper, Leo (1965) — An African Bourgeoisie. Yale University Press New Haven

Lacey, Colin (1970) — Hightown Grammar. Manchester University Press

Lacey, Marian (1981) — Working for Boroko. The Origins of a Coercive Labour System in South Africa. Ravan Johannesburg

Lodge, Tom (1983) — Black Politics in South Africa since 1945. Ravan Johannesburg

Malherbe, E. G. (1977) — Education in South Africa Vol.II 1923 - 1975. Juta Cape Town

Mansbridge, Albert (1944) — Kingdom of the Mind. Essays and Addresses 1903 - 1937. Dent London

Mayer, P. (1973) — Townsmen and Tribesmen. Oxford Cape Town

Merlean-Ponty, Maurice (1974) — Phenomenology Language and Sociology Selected Essays edited by John O'Neill. Heinemann London

Peers, R. (1966) — Adult Education: A Comparative Study Routledge and Kegan Paul London

Peires, Jeffrey (1981) — The House of Phalo. A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence. Ravan Johannesburg

Ruddock, Ralph (1980) — Perspectives on Adult Education. Manchester Monographs 2 Manchester University

Roux, Edward (1964) — Time Longer than Rope. A History of the Black Man's Struggle for Freedom in South Africa. University of Wisconsin Madison

Roux, Edward and Roux Winifred (1970) — Rebel Pity. Penguin Harmondsworth

Silver, Harold (1975) — English Education and the Radicals. Routledge and Kegan Paul London and Boston

Silver, Harold (1980) — Education and the Social Condition. Methuen London

Simon, Brian (1960) — Strides in the History of Education vol.I 1780 - 1870. Lawrence and Wishart London

Simon, Brian (1965) — Education and the Labour Movement. Studies in the History of Education. vol.II Lawrence and Wishart London

Skager, R (1978) — Lifelong Education and Evaluation Practice. Pergaman Press for Unesco Institute of Education

Stenhouse, Laurence (1975) — An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development. Heinemann London

Stocks, Mary (1953) — The Workers Educational Association. The First Fifty Years. Allen and Unwin London

Tawney, R. H. (1964) — The Radical Tradition. Penguin Harmondsworth

Thompson, E. P. (1955) — William Morris Romantic to Revolutionary. Merlin Press London

Thompson, E.P. (1963) — The Making of the English Working Class Penguin Harmondsworth (edition used 1970)

Thompson, E.P. (1968) — Education and Experience 5th Albert Mansbridge Memorial Lecture. University of Leeds

Tyler, Ralph (1949) — Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction. University of Chicago Chicago

Van Onselen, Charles (1976) — Chibaro. African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933. edition used Ravan Johannesburg 1980

Van Onselen, Charles (1982) — Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886 - 1914. vol 1 New Babylon. vol.2 New Nineveh Ravan Johannesburg

Williams, Raymond (1979) — Politics and Letters. New Left Books London

Willis, Paul E (1978) — Learning to Labour. Saxon House London

Wright Mills, C (1970) — The Sociological Imagination. Penguin Harmondsworth

2. COLLECTIONS

Bozzoli, B.(ed) (1979) — Labour, Townships and Protest Studies in the Social History of the Witwatersrand Ravan Johannesburg

Baron,Steve; Finn,Dan; Grant,Neil; Green,Michael and Johnson,Richard (1981) — Unpopular Education, Schooling and Social Democracy in England since 1944. Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Birmingham Hutchison London

Clarke,John; Critcher,Chas.; and Johnson,Richard (1979) — Working Class Culture. Studies in History and Theory. Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Birmingham Hutchison London

Hamilton, David; Jenkins,David; King,Christine; MacDonald,Barry and Parlett, Malcolm (1977) — Beyond the Numbers Game. A Reader in Educational Evaluation. MacMillan London

Innes, Duncan (1983) — Monopoly Capitalism in South Africa p.171-183 in South African Research Service (ed) South African Review One Ravan Johannesburg

Jenkins, David (ed) (1976) — Curriculum Evaluation Units 19,20,21 of Curriculum Design and Development course in Educational Studies.Open University Milton Keynes

Johnson, Richard (1979 (a) — Culture and the Historians p.41-71 in Clarke,J; Critcher,C and Johnson,R. Working Class Culture Hutchinson London

Johnson,Richard (1979 (b) — 'Really Useful Knowledge': radical education and working class culture 1790 - 1848. p.75-102 in Clarke,J; Critcher,C and Johnson,R: Working Class Culture Hutchinson London

Johnstone, F.A. (1979) — The I.W.A. on the Rand: socialist organizing among Black workers on the Rand 1917-18. p.248-272 in Bozzoli,B (ed) Labour Townships and Protest Ravan Johannesburg

Lambert,Rob and Lambert,Lynne (1983) — State Reform and Working Class Resistance 1982. p. 218 - 250 in South African Review I. Same Foundations,New Facades? South African Research Service (ed) Ravan Johannesburg

Leftwich,.Adrian (ed) (1974) — South Africa: Economic Growth and Political Change. Allison and Busby London

Mbilinyi, Marjorie (1979) — Lifelong Basic Education for the Absolute Poor in Africa. p.176-191 Schuller,Tom and Megarry Jacquetta (eds) World Year-book of Education 1979 Kogan Page London.

Parlett, Malcolm and Hamilton, David (1977) — Evaluation as Illumination: a new approach to the study of innovatory programmes. p.6-22 in Hamilton, D; Jenkins,D; King,C; MacDonald,B and Parlett, M. (eds) Beyond the Numbers Game MacMillan London

Stenhouse, Lawrence (1983) — Authority, Education and Emancipation A collection of papers. Heinemann London

Thomas, Wolfgang (ed) (1978) — Labour Perspectives on South Africa David Philip Cape Town.

Webster, Eddie (ed) (1978) — Essays in Southern African Labour History Ravan Johannesburg

Whyte, William F (1943) — Participant Observation p.103-109 in Modern Sociology Introductory Readings ed Worsley, Peter Penguin Harmondsworth

Wilson, Monica and Thompson, Leonard (eds) (1969) — Oxford History of South Africa vol.I Oxford Cape Town

(1972) — Oxford History of South Africa vol.II Oxford Cape Town

3. JOURNAL ARTICLES AND REPORTS

Bird, Adrienne (1980) — Black Adult Night School Movements on the Witwatersrand, 1920-1980. African Perspective Number 17 Spring 1980 p. 63-88

Bonner, Phil and Webster, Eddie (1979) — Background. South African Labour Bulletin (Focus on Wichahn) vol.5 No.2 1979 p. 1-12

Fine, Bob; de Clercq, Francine and Innes, Duncan (1981) — Trade Unions and the State; the question of legality. South African Labour Bulletin (State and Capital -Response to Labour) vol.7 Nos.1 and 2 September 1981 p. 39-68

General Workers Union (1981) — Reply to Fine, de Clercq and Innes South African Labour Bulletin (Debating Union Principles and Strategy) vol.7 No.3 November 1981 p.16-25

Jennings, Bernard (1977) — Revolting Students - The Ruskin College Dispute 1908-9. Studies in Adult Education vol.9 No.1 April 1977 p.1-16

Legassick, Martin (1974) — Ideology and Legislation in Post-1948 South Africa. Journal of Southern African Studies vol.1 No.1 October 1974 p.5-35

Lipton, Merle (1979) — The Debate about South Africa : Neo Marxists and Neo Liberals. African Affairs vol.78 January 1979 p. 57-80

Maree, Johann (1982) — Democracy and Oligarchy in Trade Unions. Social Dynamics vol.8 No.1 1982 p.41-52

Mezirow, Jack (1981) — A Critical Theory of Adult Learning and Education. Adult Education vol.32 No.1 Fall 1981 p. 3-24

Miller, Shirley (1982) — Trade Unions in South Africa 1978-80 A Directory and Statistics. Saldru Working Paper No.45 April 1982

Oxford and Working Class Education (1908) — Report of a Joint Committee of University and Working Class Representatives on the Relation of the University to the Higher Education of Workpeople

Reyburn, H.A. (1919) — University Education and the Working Class University of Cape Town Development Scheme Section XX11 1919. p 50-54

Rowbotham, Sheila (1981) — Travellers in a Strange Country: responses of working class students to the University Extension Movement 1873-1910. History Workshop Issue 12 Autumn 1981 p.62-95

South African Labour Bulletin Comment (2) (1974) — The Unions and the Universities. South African Labour Bulletin May 1974 vol.1 No.2 p. 3-6

Stenhouse, Lawrence (1981) — What counts as Research? British Journal of Educational Studies. vol. XX1X No.2 June 1981 p. 103-113

The Role of Universities in Worker Education (1974) — Proceedings of the Symposium on the Role of Universities in Workers' Education held by International Labour Organization Geneva 19-28 November 1973.

Wolpe, Harold (1972) — Capitalism and Cheap Labour in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid. Economy and Society vol.1 No. 4 p. 425-456

Webster, Eddie (1982) — The State, Crisis and the University: The Social Scientists' Dilemma. Perspective in Education vol.6 No.1 July 1982 p.1-14